



Concordia Theological Monthly



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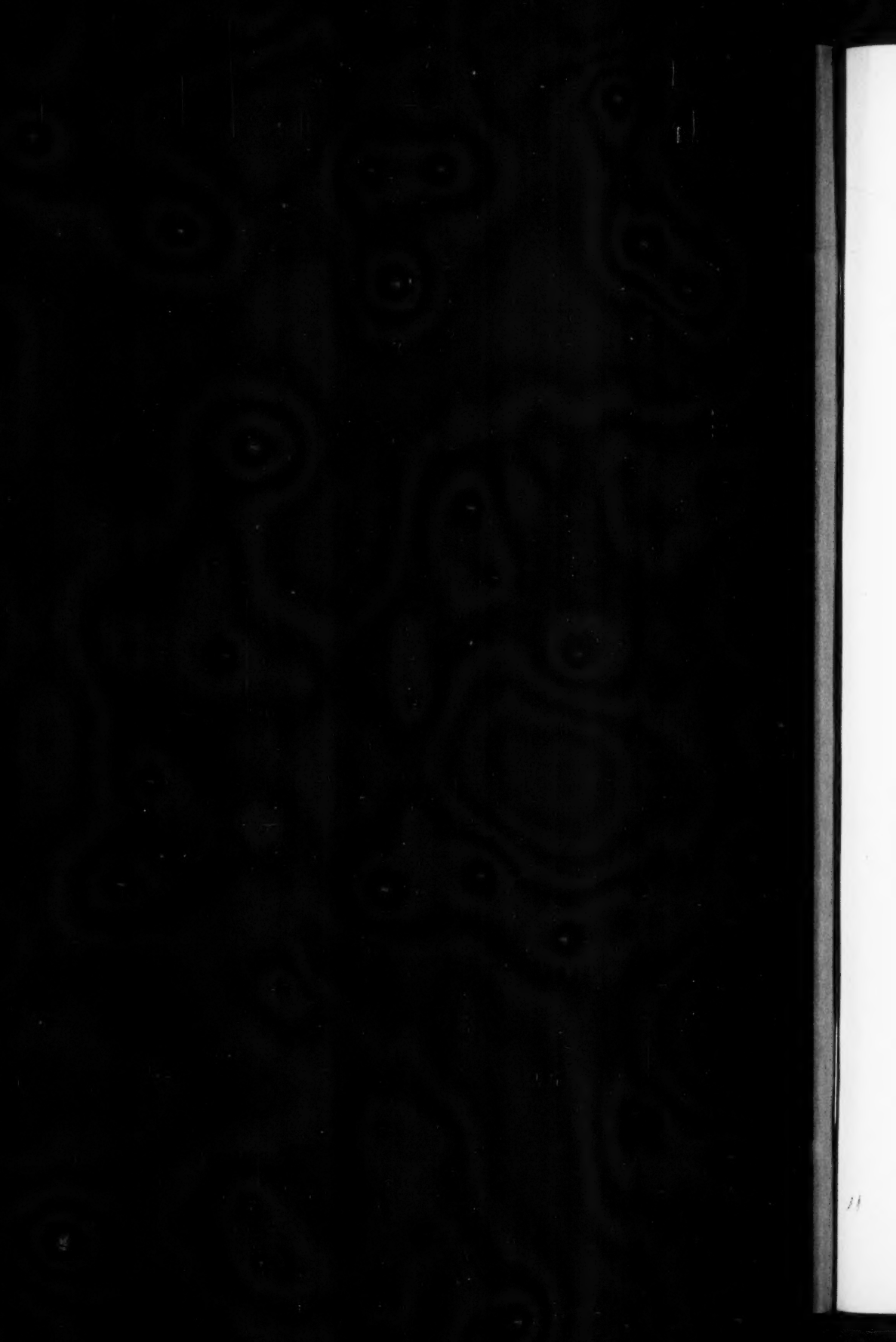
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VOL. XXII

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No. 7

Armageddon

By WM. F. ARNDT

THIS name was heard a good deal about forty years ago; the late Theodore Roosevelt used it in his speeches, calling his followers to join him in a holy political crusade; a decisive battle was going to be fought at Armageddon. He mentioned that the trusts, and capitalists in general, had overreached themselves and that an energetic campaign had to be waged against forces destroying the economic and political freedom which our country had been enjoying. "We stand at Armageddon," he shouted, "and battle for the Lord." Evidently the term had a symbolic significance as used by him.

Armageddon is a Bible term occurring Rev. 16:16: "And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon" (A. V.). The name means "Hill of Megiddo." It is true that other derivations have been proposed. Bousset in his commentary on Revelation, while admitting that the etymology just given had up to this time been almost universally accepted by exegetes, rejects this explanation, stating that there is no mountain of Megiddo and that the town of this name is situated in a plain. He contends, furthermore, somewhat naively, that battles usually are not fought on mountains. That his objections have no weight will become clear as we go on. Megiddo was a place famous in Israelitish history. Here the great battle against Jabin, King of Canaan, that reigned in Hazor, and his general, Sisera, had taken place. The prophetess Deborah and Barak had led the small forces of the Israelites against the mighty hosts of the Canaanites from the north and had utterly defeated them in the plain of Megiddo. If you will look at an atlas, you will find, not far from Mount Carmel in the west, the place called Megiddo. It

was distinguished by a hill, which formed the southwestern bastion, as it were, of the fertile plain called Esdraelon or Jezreel, a plain that stretches to the northeast, for about fifteen miles, till it touches Mount Tabor. Through this plain flows the river Kishon. Barak and Deborah had gathered their forces on Mount Tabor, that peculiar cone rising quite abruptly out of the plain, and from there they had rushed down upon the enemy and with the help of the Lord had completely defeated Jabin and Sisera. In exalted poetical language the Song of Deborah speaks of this victory, Judg. 5:19-21: "The kings came and fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo; they took no gain of money. They fought from heaven; the stars in their courses fought against Sisera. The river of Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon." There are several other passages in the Old Testament where Megiddo is mentioned. A sad event for the Israelites took place there when, after the foolish challenge of good King Josiah extended to Pharaoh-nechoh of Egypt to meet him in battle, the clash occurred at Megiddo and Josiah was mortally wounded and died. At Megiddo there is a pass leading from the plain of Sharon along the Mediterranean to the plain of Esdraelon. The hill of Megiddo governs this pass. And it was at this strategic place that Josiah with his inferior force opposed Pharaoh-nechoh and suffered the defeat brought on by his presumptuous action. Cf. 2 Kings 23:29, 30; 2 Chron. 35:20-24. We see how wrong the criticism of Bousset is. Armageddon need not mean mountain or mountain range of Megiddo, it may well designate what we call a hill, and whether or not battles are fought on mountains, they are frequently fought at the foot of and around hills.

The hill of Megiddo, or Armageddon, rising probably one hundred feet above the plain, has been excavated and its various strata laid bare, first by German scholars and then, since 1925, by the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, which in 1947, when the Church Craft Pictures expedition visited the mound, still had caretakers on the spot. The excavations have been remarkably fruitful. The whole history of Canaan, or Palestine, here receives illustration, so to speak. Altars have been found representing the early Canaanitish worship. At some time before the exodus of the

Israelites from Egypt the Egyptians under their mighty King Thotmes III had conquered the territory around Mount Carmel, and the archaeologists have come upon the Egyptian sections of the remains on this hill. Further sections have been uncovered, and by and by scholars found buildings that go back to the reign of Solomon. They have brought to light the stables where this king kept some of his many horses; you are shown the hitching posts made of stone. With sadness one sees next the altar or altars erected by Ahab and Jezebel in their worship of Baal. Thus one stratum succeeds the other, till the Greek and Roman times are reached. One thing is certain: Megiddo occupied an important strategic position, and to be in possession of the hill of Megiddo, the Armageddon, was a requisite for any king or leader who conspired to lordship over northern Palestine.

What has all this to do with Rev. 16:16? We have to look at the context of that passage. Ch. 16 of the Book of Revelation tells about the seven angels that poured out vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. The terrible plagues and disasters that came as a result of such pouring are described. About the sixth angel and his activity, this is the recital of the holy seer, vv. 12 f.: "The sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty." V. 15 is a word of warning, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame." V. 16 I translate thus: "And they, that is, the evil spirits, gathered them at the place called in Hebrew Armageddon." The King James Version says: "He gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon." The verb form is the singular, and hence the King James translation is grammatically altogether possible. But in the preceding verses the evil spirits have been spoken of as the beings which are engaged in activities, and since spirits is a neuter noun (πνεύματα), the predi-

cate normally likewise is singular. Hence I take "spirits" to be the subject of the verb "gathered together."

What does the vision mean? As I see it, simply this, that the forces of evil led by Satan and his special adjutants will gather for battle against God in the terrific conflict of the last days.

There is something peculiar about the sixth vial. All of the preceding vials of wrath bring on terrible physical suffering, according to the picture language employed. But this sixth vial does not usher in bodily pains and torments. It is an announcement of the coming of unclean spirits which work signs and lead the rulers of the earth to oppose our great God. Are we here dealing with an outpouring of God's wrath? Certainly there can be no greater visitation of a community or nation than an invasion by spirits of falsehood and deception. We recall that Paul writes 2 Thess. 2:11 f.: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, and that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Of course, this must be correctly understood. God desires the salvation of every human being—that is a truth which the Scriptures set forth with glorious clarity. But if men persistently reject the truth, it may happen that divine patience ends and the judgment sets in: the Lord declares that the time of grace is ended, His Spirit is withdrawn, and the lover of error and wickedness is turned over to the powers of darkness. Such evidently is the condition obtaining in the sections of mankind where the evil spirits make their invasion and are permitted to reign triumphantly.

The evil spirits call the kings of the earth together for the battle against God Almighty on the Great Day of the Lord. The Great Day is undoubtedly the Day of Judgment, the last day of the present universe. The place of battle is Armageddon. It is clear that we are not to think of one special geographical spot. Since the Armageddon in Palestine many a time in the past has been the scene of important battles, the term here in Revelation has taken on the general significance of field of decision, as we today speak of Waterloo or Verdun, saying, for instance, that Hitler found his Waterloo at such and such a place. Armageddon then points to the time and occasion of the last great conflict between the forces of evil and our Lord, the exalted Christ. This is the

view taken of the use of Armageddon in Revelation 16 in the excellent brief commentary of C. H. Little which has recently appeared; he says, "The battle itself is not here described; but the name of the place of this gathering together is given in the Hebrew as Armageddon. This does not denote a geographical location, but refers to the great battlefield against all the forces of evil in which will occur their final and utter defeat." The description of the battle is placed before us in Rev. 19:11 ff.: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations; and He shall rule them with a rod of iron; and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords." Then comes the battle. The beast and the false prophet are thrown into a lake of fire. And the remnant are slain with the sword of Him that sits upon the horse, which sword proceeds out of His mouth.

This is but another way of describing that dread hour of which Jesus in Matt. 13:41 f. says: "The Son of Man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and they which do iniquity, and they shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." It will be a day of punishment for the wicked and, God be praised for it! of deliverance for the believers in Jesus Christ, for the Lord continues, v. 43: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

There is a question which has to be answered here. Does Armageddon really refer to the end of the world, that is, to what will happen on the Last Day? We recall that Revelation 19 is not the last chapter in that apocalyptic book, but that after ch. 19 comes ch. 20, with its announcement of the binding of Satan for

one thousand years, and the thousand years of peace, and the final struggle between Gog and Magog and Satan and all his forces on the one hand and God and the saints on the other, and the final victory of the Lord. It might seem, then, that the battle of Armageddon is not the last, but probably the second-last great battle. My reply is that the impression created by Rev. 16:16 and Revelation 19 is that here the final struggle is described. The hosts of evil are gathered, and they are utterly vanquished. All the remnant were slain, says Rev. 19:21. No followers of Satan were left. Where could Satan get another army? This reminds us that the Book of Revelation is constructed in a peculiar way. The various scenes and events throughout the book are not meant to be viewed as following one the other in a long endless chain, but some of them, probably many of them, are synchronous. We are here dealing with paintings which describe the Last Times, and the end of the world is placed before us repeatedly. Cf. e.g., ch. 6:12-17; 11:15-19. Hence, as I view it, ch. 20 is simply another painting of the Last Times, setting forth the truth that had not been emphasized in what preceded—that there would occur a period of calm, of comparative peace, when Satan would be bound.

There is another question which requires consideration. The Book of Revelation, as we have seen, speaks of a great final battle between the forces of Satan and those of God. We do not find that our Lord in His long and stirring eschatological discourse, Matthew 24 and 25, Mark 13, and Luke 21 has anything to say about such a battle. What Jesus prophesies is that in the Last Days there will be a falling away of many, false prophets will arise and deceive great multitudes; love will grow cold, His disciples will be persecuted, in the world there will be wars and rumors of wars, earthquakes and famines. The picture apparently is altogether different from that given in the Book of Revelation. Is there a contradiction here? Not at all. Jesus depicts in more or less literal language what the Book of Revelation describes in highly symbolical and picturesque terms. The whole Book of Revelation is shot through with such metaphorical descriptions which we have to translate back into normal speech to obtain the intended significance. The Last Times, with the wickedness which will be widely practiced, will resemble a field of battle, where, as it were, Christ enters

the conflict against all the iniquities, the errors, the blasphemies, the worship of the golden calf, and of the sinful flesh as these evil factors loom larger and larger the more closely the end is approaching.

But are we here dealing so much with trees that we do not see the forest? Do exegetical and historical minutiae occupy us instead of the great issues of the kingdom of God and the conditions about us? The term Armageddon must remind us that we are still on earth, in a vale of tears, that a terrific final conflict is either coming or is in progress even now, when Satan and all his cohorts will once more exert themselves to the utmost to bring about the apostasy of God's children. We do not say that Armageddon will be here in a year or two, because it is not for us to fix the time and occasion of the final decision. But can we deny that when we look at mankind endeavoring to destroy itself in wars, in class struggles, embracing at the same time ever more widely the tenets of unbelief and moral turpitude, can we deny that from the point of view of the Bible Christian it is definitely toward evening and the day is far spent? Are we as a Church warning our people sufficiently against the evil tendencies and practices of the Last Times? Armageddon is coming. Do we mention it often enough? It is true, the enormous tidal wave of the final apostasy we shall not be able to stop, it will relentlessly roll forward to the final consummation. But we should at least do our duty as watchmen and cry out to the world, Take heed! Repent! Let that be the lesson which we learn from Revelation 16.

May God grant us His Holy Spirit that at the final Armageddon we shall stand on the side of our heavenly Lord even if this means the suffering of ridicule and persecution in the days preceding the Judgment. May Jesus Himself keep us faithful for His love's sake.

St. Louis, Mo.

The Moral and Spiritual Qualifications of the Biblical Interpreter

By RAYMOND F. SURBURG

THE existence of many different Christian sects and denominations, although all purport to base their theological tenets on the Bible, has been a source of great perplexity to Christian and non-Christian students of the religious life of the past and present. While a number of reasons have been advanced for this situation, one of the underlying causes has been correctly stated by Burrows when he wrote: "Wrong methods of interpretation and use have prevented Christians hitherto from arriving at any unity in their understanding of the Scriptures."¹

There is no error of the human mind which has not claimed support for itself in some Scripture passage. Polygamy, slavery, racial discrimination, and a host of abnormal and absurd religious developments have all used the Bible as a basis for their contention.² The conclusions which religionists have deduced from Holy Writ have been determined by the manner in which they have handled Scripture.³ Even such anti-Christian cults as Christian Science, Mormonism, Spiritualism, and Millennial Dawnism adduce Scriptural warrant for their religious systems.

It goes beyond question that the Bible was not given to have multifarious and variegated meanings or to cause confusion in the minds of its readers.⁴ As sane men, the writers of the Scriptures must have had a single, definite, and clear-cut meaning in mind at the time when they penned their books. It is, therefore, unreasonable to assume that a Biblical writer did not understand his own words or meant them to be construed in a double sense. Thus it can be asserted, on the basis of the Bible's self-testimony concerning its perspicuity, that there can be but one system of related and interdependent revelation in God's Word.⁵ Although Calvinism, Arminianism, Romanism, Lutheranism, and various forms of mil-

lennialism build their respective theological systems on the Scriptures, they certainly cannot all be correct in the doctrines in which they differ and in which they sometimes are even diametrically opposed to each other. These widely divergent and contradictory systems of dogmatical formulations emphasize the fallibility even of sincere men when handling the Bible and clearly show that there is no unity on the principles underlying sound interpretation. The assertion of Preus is true when he said: "The urgent need of Protestantism is agreement, not so much in polity or practice, nor even in the doctrine, but in principle of interpretation."⁶

If a common set of rules is to be found which is to govern the interpretation of the Bible, it is necessary to determine the reasons for the existence of different schools of interpretation,⁷ and consequently, of wrong, faulty, incomplete, and superficial expositions of Biblical thought. All incorrect explanations, as well as partial ones, may be traced to two major causes: 1. Failure to apprehend accurately what the author wrote; 2. The mistake of attributing to him something he never intended to write or did not write.⁸ Binns listed the following as the most common sources responsible for wrong interpretations: 1. Ignorance of the original languages of the Bible; 2. Failure to use the original languages of the Bible; 3. Prejudice, i. e., attempting to use the Scriptures to support some dogma or some theological position when it is not justified; 4. The use of allegory; 5. Individual eccentricity, i. e., when preachers select a text as a kind of peg upon which to hang a variety of interpretations, completely irrelevant to the text; and 6. The desire to find everything in the Bible.⁹ A study of the history of Biblical interpretation in the Christian Church, past and present, will support Binn's enumeration, although his classification by no means exhausts the possible reasons for wrong exegesis.¹⁰

Failure adequately to grasp the thought of a Biblical author or to attribute to his writing an incorrect or incomplete meaning may, furthermore, be said to be due to two specific factors: 1. A defective knowledge of Biblical hermeneutics; and 2. The failure by the exegete to meet certain requisite conditions before the art of exegesis can be practiced.

A defective knowledge of the science of Biblical hermeneutics,

defined by Franzmann as the theological discipline "which sets forth the principles that are to guide us in the interpretation of the Scriptures,"¹¹ or failure to apply its principles when known, has been one of the chief contributing causes to the welter of confusion existing on practically every vital Christian doctrine. All pastors, missionaries, theological professors, religious teachers, or individuals intent upon communicating to others the message of the Bible, need a thorough knowledge of the science of Biblical hermeneutics. The general neglect and scant attention given to it in the modern theological curriculum are to be deplored.¹² The whole science of Biblical exegesis depends upon its mastery.¹³ Biblical hermeneutics is the central department of Bible study and provides all other branches with their materials.¹⁴ Accurate and penetrating exegesis, interesting and effective homiletics, vital and sound dogmatics, correct and faith-building catechetics, edifying and faith-sustaining liturgics, and true and helpful pastoral practice are all dependent upon a correct understanding of Holy Writ. Speaking of the importance of interpretation in the life of a pastor, Lewis Sperry Chafer asserted: "It is properly required of the theologian that he both understand and expound the Scriptures. This is the distinctive field in which he serves."¹⁵

A perusal of theological literature in recent years gives the student of Biblical hermeneutics the impression that a normative science of Biblical interpretation is non-existent.¹⁶ Easton claimed that in contemporary Biblical study the attempt to construct a formal discipline of hermeneutics has been abandoned.^{16a} The current field of Protestant Biblical interpretation presents a number of all-important and acute problems. The following are some of the questions that have disturbed the minds of Protestant exegetes: Does Biblical interpretation have a principle all its own in which it differs from all other types of interpretation?¹⁷ Are the principles formulated at the Ecumenical Study Conference, held in Oxford from June 29 to July 5, 1949, valid?^{17a} What is the relation of historical and exegetical exegesis?¹⁸ Are the Scriptures the Word of God, or do they merely *contain* the Word of God?¹⁹ Is the Bible infallibly inspired merely in its thought or in its words also?²⁰ Does Scripture contain errors, contradictions, mistaken notions, and outdated concepts?²¹ Are the principles of Biblical hermeneutics to

be determined by the Scriptures themselves or by human reason?²² Is reason to be used as the means for receiving what God offers, or is it the seat of authority? Is the inspiration of the Bible to be understood as static or as dynamic?²³ Is Von Hofman's *Heilsgeschichte* idea (holy history), represented now by Piper at Princeton in America, to be made the organizing principle of Biblical interpretation?²⁴ Must the pre-literary stage of the Gospels be examined before the narratives and sayings of the Gospels can be interpreted?²⁵ Is the Word of God synonymous with the Bible? Can they be considered interchangeable concepts?²⁶ Are the deepest penetrations concerned with life and death, love and hate, sin and grace, good and evil, the view of the existentialists?²⁷ The answers given to these significant questions will in one way or another influence the formulations of one's principles of interpretation.

Greatly in need of clarification is also the purpose or meaning of interpretation.²⁸ While hermeneutics gives the theory of practice, exegesis may be said to be putting the theory into practice. According to some, interpretation consists in ascertaining why a passage was given, or what the original purpose was in the mind of the writer.²⁹ It is claimed by some that the interpretation of a passage is to be kept strictly apart from its application to the life of the individual or to that of a group.³⁰ On the other hand, for others the practice of exegesis implies translation and criticism of a passage.³¹ Piper said interpretation consists of "two different though closely related processes — exegesis and appropriation."³² For Rowley, an exposition that stops after determining the original meaning of a text is insufficient; its abiding means must also be offered.³³ Quanbeck averred that "effective interpretation of Scripture must be a vital synthesis created by the living message of the Bible, experienced in the life of the exegete, confronted and tested by the experience of the church."³⁴ According to Wilder, interpretation involves a critical reinterpretation of the Biblical passages that an exegete handles.³⁵ Until there is unanimity of opinion among scholars as to the meaning of interpretation there will be diverse and wrong systems of interpretation.

Before the principles of interpretation, however, can even be applied by the Biblical expositor, there are certain presuppositions that must be met. When these conditions are not fulfilled, the

result is another factor contributing to misinterpretation and faulty exposition. Otto Piper listed the following presuppositions to correct interpretation:

Exegesis proper presupposes textual and literary criticism of the document. The exegete of the New Testament has to know, for instance, whether the text upon which he works represents the original text of the autographs, or the textual form of the fourth century. His work also presupposes knowledge of the historical background of the author, the document, and its subject matter. It is one of the great lessons of modern historical research to teach us that we are apt to miss completely the understanding of the original meaning of a document when we disregard the differences between its age and ours. Finally, the interpretation of a document written in a foreign language requires not only a good lexicon, but also an extensive knowledge of the history of that language, its idioms, and, above all, the specific terminology of the document under study.³⁶

As studies preliminary to exegesis, Burton listed textual criticism, grammar, lexicography, and knowledge of the times and movement out of which the Scriptures came.³⁷ To these Hebert would also add as necessary prerequisites the exact study of the philology of Hebrew, Biblical Aramaic, and *Koine* Greek, the archaeological discoveries made in Bible lands, the comparative study of religion, and a fuller knowledge of rabbinic writings.³⁸ Because of a lack of knowledge *about* the Bible, patristic and medieval expositors were guilty of faulty exegesis.³⁹

An exegete may have met all these prerequisites and be able correctly to apply the rules of hermeneutics, and yet fail to do satisfactory exegetical work. A factor, frequently overlooked as being part of the prolegomena for sound interpretation, is the personality of the expositor. The problem of correctly presenting an author's thought comes under the purview of epistemology. All knowledge can be said to result from the meeting of a subject and an object. The origin of all epistemological problems is to be found in the reciprocal relations of these two factors, and because of the unpredictable manner in which they interact upon each other, there develops of necessity the relativity of human knowledge.⁴⁰

Torm has reminded New Testament students that the individual

psychological constitution of the subject is bound to influence the object of interpretation.⁴¹ Cell  rier, in the middle of the last century, asserted concerning the importance of psychological hermeneutics: "Psychological Hermeneutics is the investigation of the moral and intellectual conditions, devoid of which the interpreter is incapable of accomplishing his task."⁴² Evans claimed that before endeavoring to apply the principles of interpretation to Scripture, it is necessary to consider the spiritual qualities of the expositor.⁴³ According to Torrey, Bible interpretation will only then be successful when certain fundamental conditions have been met. Foremost among them he considered the moral and spiritual qualifications of the exegete.⁴⁴ With this judgment Terry agreed some sixty years ago, when he wrote: "In order to be a capable and correct interpreter of the Holy Scriptures, one needs a variety of qualifications, both natural and acquired."⁴⁵ Norlie placed mood before mode in Bible study, asserting that the older interpreters of God's Word emphasized the proper mood when approaching the Scriptures.⁴⁶ For Griffith Thomas, the spiritual qualifications of the exegete were the most important consideration in the field of Biblical exposition.⁴⁷

Despite the prime importance of the psychological qualifications of the expositor, an examination of manuals and helps designed to acquaint Biblical students with the art of successfully communicating to others the thought of Biblical writers, will reveal that many have failed to take into consideration the required personal qualifications for the exegete. The following manuals and articles on hermeneutics and exegesis neglected to discuss the necessary personal qualifications of the interpreter: Wilcke,⁴⁸ Patrick Fairbairn,⁴⁹ Schodde,⁵⁰ F. Hilber,⁵¹ Colwell,⁵² Hendricksen,⁵³ and Berkhof.⁵⁴ Others have noted only one or at most two requirements needed by the interpreter: J. Ch. von Hofmann,⁵⁵ McClelland,⁵⁶ Doedes,⁵⁷ Immer,⁵⁸ Baumgaertel and Luetgert,⁵⁹ Volz,⁶⁰ Heinrici,⁶¹ Rollin Chafer,⁶² and Torm.⁶³ The following books contain a more complete discussion of the personal qualifications of the exegete: Dunn,⁶⁴ Gardiner,⁶⁵ Elliott and Harsha,⁶⁶ Terry,⁶⁷ and Torrey.⁶⁸

Schaff coupled the necessary qualifications of the interpreter into two groups: intellectual and educational, moral and spiritual.⁶⁹ Terry grouped them into three classes: educational, intellectual, and

spiritual.⁷⁰ Weidner, following Cellérier, wrote of "faculties, tendencies or dispositions, and principles needed by the expositor."⁷¹ The faculties he divided into intellectual and moral, while the dispositions necessary for the expositor, according to him, were love of the truth, the search for clear ideas, faith, and piety.⁷²

In this essay the moral and spiritual qualifications of the exegete are to be discussed, while the educational and intellectual will not be considered. Under the designation "qualification" there will be included all needed faculties, tendencies, or dispositions required by the expositor on his moral and spiritual side.

Since there are many passages in the Scriptures that do not merely make their appeal to the intellect and to the requirements of logic, the interpreter must also have a moral faculty. The Bible was written as much for men's hearts as for their intellects. Thus Job (13:15) exclaimed: "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him," thus implying on Job's part a willingness to believe God even though it seemed fantastic and unreasonable.

The most important requisite — a psychological one — is a spiritual mind, a result of the new birth. The Scriptures themselves make this demand when they declare: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14). Man by birth is alienated from the life in God, termed by Saint Paul as "enmity against God," and no amount of education and learning can change that condition in an unregenerate expositor. Unless an exegete is born from above, the Bible will remain a sealed book. The following passage from the book of Isaiah sets forth clearly the truth that unless God gives the understanding, the message will remain unintelligible to the unconverted exegete:

And the vision of all is become unto you as the words of a book that is sealed, which [when] men deliver [it] to one that is learned, saying: Read this, I pray thee; and he saith: I cannot, for it is sealed; and the book is delivered to him that is not learned, saying: Read this, I pray thee; and he saith: I am not learned. Wherefore the Lord said: Forasmuch as this people draw near Me with their mouth and with their lips do honor Me, but have removed their heart far from Me, and their fear toward Me is taught

by the precept of men, therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvelous work among this people, even a marvelous work and a wonder; for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid (Is. 29:11-14).

Saint Paul wrote to Timothy: "Consider what I say, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things" (2 Tim. 2:7). Despite the clearness of Scripture in this matter, Colwell rejected the necessity for the new birth as a condition for adequate exegesis. He unequivocally declared: "The student who uses the historical method of interpreting the Bible relies upon no supernatural aids."⁷³ Again in the same book he wrote: "The plea for some special endowment as a prerequisite for biblical study seems rather out of place in such areas as textual criticism and the study of biblical languages."⁷⁴ Torrey claimed that in colleges, universities, and theological seminaries there are Biblical expositors who are spiritually unprepared for the task they are attempting.⁷⁵ It would be just as reasonable to appoint a person to teach art to students because he possesses an accurate knowledge of paints. Every art student knows that art interpretation requires the gift of artistic sense as essential for its teaching. To expect an unconverted individual adequately to interpret the Scriptures or any part thereof is as unreasonable as to suppose a blind person can appreciate a sunset, or someone deaf respond to the music of the great masters.⁷⁶ The spiritual mind may be said to be the key that adequately unlocks the treasure house of God's riches contained in the Word.

No mere knowledge of the human languages in which the Bible was written, however extensive and accurate it may be, can alone qualify a person for adequate understanding and interpretation of God's Word.⁷⁷ Thus Fuerbringer asserted: "Zur exegetischen Tüchtigkeit des Theologen gehoert aber nicht nur die Kenntnis richtiger hermeneutischer Grundsätze und Regeln. Vielmehr ist dabei vorausgesetzt . . . wahre Erleuchtung und Herzensfroemigkeit."⁷⁸ One of the tragedies in the history of recent Biblical exegesis has been the existence of unregenerated teachers of the Bible, who, because of their knowledge of Hebrew, Biblical Aramaic, and *Koine* Greek, endeavored to interpret the Scriptures to students. Thus Rowley admitted that in the last decades many essayed to interpret

the Old and New Testaments, being unqualified by virtue of their irreverent approach. To quote his own words:

Yet it must be recognized that to many Biblical study became a matter of merely scientific investigation, the detached examination of an ancient literature, and the establishment of its text and the meaning that text had for the original writers. To understand the times in which a book was written, to think oneself back into those times, and to feel anew the impact of the words upon their first hearers, was to reach the goal of Biblical study.⁷⁹

The religious man and the irreligious man will not have the same experience as they try to understand the Holy Scriptures. Over fifty years ago Gardiner asserted: "Only a religious man can see the things as they (i.e., as the Biblical authors) saw them, and understand things as they understood them."⁸⁰ "But it does follow that, since the Bible is essentially a spiritual book, it is impossible to enter into its deeper and richer meaning until there is a religious harmony between it and the spirit of the interpreter."⁸¹

It is true that the historical and hortatory portions of the Bible are comprehensible to the unregenerate Bible expositor. Those portions, however, that contain doctrine will be closed to him, despite his education and culture, because he is deficient in inward personal adjustment to God, who alone can assure spiritual understanding. It is as Lewis Sperry Chafer remarked: "There is a limitless yet hidden spiritual content within the Bible which contributes much to its supernatural character. . . . The natural capacities of the human mind do not function in the realm of spiritual things."⁸² Saint Paul, in writing about those truths and doctrines revealed by the Holy Spirit, said:

Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. . . . For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct Him? But we have the mind of Christ. (1 Cor. 2:13, 14, 16.)

Jesus pointed out about the unbelieving Jews of His day that they could not understand His teachings because of the alienation of their hearts from God. (John 8:43-47; Matt. 6:22 f.; 13:11.)

The Apostles emphasized the importance of spiritual enlightenment as a prerequisite for knowing and understanding the revelation made to the Church by the Spirit of God. Thus Saint Paul gave the following as the reason for those being lost: "But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine unto them" (2 Cor. 4:3-4). Saint John, in the concluding words of his First Letter, described spiritual understanding as a gift of God: "And we know that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding, that we may know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ" (1 John 5:20).

Since the Bible is a God-breathed book, the product of the activity of the Holy Spirit on human writers, and conversion, or new birth, in man a result of the Spirit's influence, it consequently follows as a further qualification of the Biblical exegete that he must ever realize his dependence on the Holy Spirit. The disposition must be ever present which seeks the aid and guidance of the Divine Interpreter. Only through the agency of a greater dynamic than the human will and a greater Teacher than the human intellect can the message of the Bible be apprehended. Anyone who has tried to understand and convey the meaning accurately to others has discovered that in certain parts the Bible is a difficult book. This is also true, however, of non-Biblical writings. Aristotle, Bacon, Dante, and Goethe have left literary works which contain passages that have defied commentators. Thus a whole school of interpretation in regard to Aristotle's writings has developed. Many of the problematic passages in this literature could be explained by Aristotle, if he were alive and could be consulted. There is, however, one great difference between the Bible and great secular classics.⁸³ While the authors of outstanding books of the past are dead and so unavailable for consultation, this does not hold true of the Bible. The Biblical expositor, however, is more fortunate in that he can call upon Him who caused the Scriptures to be written, who is an everliving Person, and One whose function it is to guide Christ's followers into all truth. Spurgeon, speaking of this advantage possessed by the Biblical exegete, said: "Many can bring the Scrip-

tures to the mind, but the Lord alone can prepare the mind to receive the Scriptures."⁸⁴ Samuel Taylor Coleridge made the following pronouncement and comparison: "The Bible without the Spirit is a sundial by moonlight."⁸⁵ Frank Gaebelein has termed this feeling of dependence upon the Holy Ghost the *sine qua non* of Scriptural exposition.⁸⁶

Aside from all conjecture as to how the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were inspired, are the facts that it is *theopneustos* (God-breathed) and that it came to the Church through men "who were borne along by the Holy Spirit."⁸⁷ This means that the Holy Ghost is still connected with the Bible. The same Spirit who once caused the Bible to come into existence is still breathing through it, and as Saphir so aptly remarked: "The Spirit makes the Scripture a living word. The Spirit breathes here as in no other book. He makes the writing spirit and life, and man lives by it, because it is word proceeding *even now* out of the mouth of God."⁸⁸

In all exegetical efforts, therefore, it is imperative to depend upon the Holy Spirit to reveal the mind of God. This need for absolute dependence by the expositor upon the Holy Spirit is the same as the anointing spoken of by Saint John when he wrote:

But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him. (1 John 2:27.)

That the Holy Spirit imparts an understanding to the disciples of Christ is clearly set forth by Saint Paul in 1 Corinthians:

But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (1 Cor. 2:10-13.)

The same Spirit of God who caused the Bible to be written must open the eyes of the Christian expositor; He must constantly enlighten the Christian understanding. Herein is to be found the "key to the understanding of the Bible," for without it there can exist only confusion and misunderstanding.⁸⁹ The oft-quoted dictum of Jowett that the Bible is to be interpreted like any other book is not entirely true, for the spiritual quality in the Word needs a kindred spiritual qualification in the worker that only the Spirit can give. Griffith Thomas has stated this essential qualification of Christian interpretation, which is more than the scholarly, literary, and historical interpretation of the Bible, in these words:

It is simply impossible to understand a book which emanated from the Holy Spirit without the Spirit Himself as the Illuminator of our spirit. . . . When the modern reader of Holy Scripture comes to Christianity with a humble, earnest desire to learn from Scripture what the Holy Spirit has there recorded, he will soon discover the reality and blessedness of its unique power.⁹⁰

In this connection, however, a warning must be given against what von Dobschuetz has called "enthusiastische Exegese."⁹¹ This type of interpretation claims to rely upon the direct activity of the Spirit. The guidance and aid of the Spirit are not obtained apart from the Scriptures.⁹² Failure to give heed to this truth has led to all manner of religious aberration, as the history of Christianity so amply shows. The danger of postulating a special light not mediated by the Word of God, as Dunn has pointed out, would mean that these new revelations and communications governed the words and teachings given through the Biblical authors.⁹³

Many exegetes and Biblical students, past and present, have misunderstood what is involved in the guidance of the Spirit promised to Christians in the New Testament. Thus Bacon contended that the Church must not cast out those, as, for example, the textual and higher critics, who, listening for the movement of God's Spirit across the ages, become "God-intoxicated" and accomplish as much as any of the saints of God in the past.⁹⁴ In the middle of the last century, Horace Bushnell in one of his sermons asserted:

It is a great misfortune, as I view it, that we have brought down the word *inspiration* to a use so narrow and technical: asserting it only of prophecy and other scripture writings, and carefully exclud-

ing from it all participation, by ourselves, in whatever sense it might be taken. We cut ourselves off, in this manner, from any common terms with the anointed men of scripture and the scripture times. They belong to another tier of existence, with which we can not dare to claim affinity; and so we become a class unprivileged, shut down to a kind of second-hand life, feeding on their words. The result is that we are occupied almost wholly with second-hand relations to God. . . . And so, being shut down to a meaner existence, there is no relief for us but in recoil against inspiration itself, even that of the Holy Scriptures; for, who will believe . . . that men were inspired long ages ago, 'when now any such thing is incredible?'⁹⁵

This attitude was found to dominate the critical movement of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and resulted in the lording over of the inspired Scriptures by the so-called illuminated critics. The root of this philosophy, which did not hesitate to reject the miraculous and the supernatural elements of the Bible, was premised on the assumption that the Holy Spirit enlightens the mind of man by other means than that of the Word. Thus Briggs placed the Church and human reason on a par with the Scriptures as fountains of divine revelation.⁹⁶

While the Roman Catholic Church claims that the Sacred Scriptures can rightly be interpreted only under the Holy Spirit's guidance, yet it ascribes to itself this prerogative of being the only one qualified to understand and interpret correctly Holy Writ, and denies that the Spirit's guidance has been promised the individual Christian.⁹⁷ Thus Seisenberger, on the basis of the encyclical of Leo XIII, *Providentissimus Deus* (November 18, 1893) averred: "Nothing more is required than that man shall submit his opinion to the Holy Ghost, who guides the Church."⁹⁸ This position contravenes the clear teaching of Scripture, a word spoken by Christ, which guarantees the gift of the Holy Spirit to all asking for it (Luke 11:13).

The conception of Barth, Brunner, and of dialectical theology, which also predicates a guidance of the Holy Spirit in the realm of exegesis not mediated through the Scriptures themselves, must be likewise repudiated.⁹⁹ What the dialectical theologians refuse to concede is that the Holy Spirit speaks to men solely through the Scriptures.¹⁰⁰ The guidance and enlightenment of the Holy Spirit

consists in the influence which the Spirit of Truth brings to bear upon the interpreter so that the latter will have a clearer and deeper insight into the Divine Mind and Will as portrayed in the Scriptures. But this guidance goes hand in hand with the Scriptures. Richardson well apprehended this truth when he wrote:

If God speaks to men through the Church, that is because the Church is the place where the Bible is read, or it is the community which listens to the public reading of the Bible. If God speaks to men through the sacraments, that is because they are the sacraments of the Bible-drama. If God speaks to man in the sermon, that is because the Bible is preached. If God speaks to men in prayer, that is because the prayer is the prayer of the Bible. And if God speaks to men through nature, or through things which are lovely and characters which are noble, that is because they have learnt from the Bible the accents of His voice. The Bible is and remains the appointed means of God's conversation with men.¹⁰¹

The need of the Holy Spirit's guidance does not, however, mean that the Biblical exegete is warranted in approaching his task with anything short of the greatest wisdom and understanding attainable by him. He must endeavor to employ the best tools and methods that sound scholarship has made available. Cunliffe-Jones expressed this proviso thus: "The best scholarship and the widest and most careful learning are indeed no substitute for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, but the guidance of the Holy Spirit is no substitute for the best scholarship that is available for our use."¹⁰²

The exegete must further approach the work of Biblical interpretation with a prayerful mental attitude. Prayer and correct exposition go hand in hand. To a first-century Bible interpreter, Saint Paul wrote: "For every creature of God . . . is sanctified by the Word of God and prayer" (1 Tim. 4:4-5). A prayerful disposition is vital to successful Bible study. Every interpreter needs to approach his task with the Psalmist's prayer: "Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law" (Ps. 119:18).¹⁰³

A forthright study of Scripture will reveal to men their limited mental potentialities and deficiencies, and prompt them to beseech God for enlightenment and aid. Thus Saint James promises: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men

liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him" (James 1:5). Solomon encouraged the Bible student to ask: "Yea, if thou criest after knowledge and liftest up thy voice for understanding, if thou seekest her as silver and searchest for her as for hid treasures, then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God" (Prov. 2:3-5). Saint Paul urged the Ephesian Christians to call upon the Father to give them "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened . . ." (Eph. 1:17-18). Saint John admonished the Laodiceans to obtain eyesalve from the Lord, "that thou mayest see" (Rev. 3:18). Christ encouraged His followers to pray for the Spirit: "If ye, then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him!" (Luke 11:13.)

Richard Baxter, eminent English theologian, studied his sermon texts on his knees. For the sake of defining to his own mind more clearly the precise object of his prayer, he would place his finger on the word for which he wanted a clearer notion or a deeper sense and would pray: "Lord, reveal even *this* to me; show me Thy meaning."¹⁰⁴ "As a rational expedient for learning God's thought in God's Word," asserted Austin Phelps, "prayer means more than we are apt to think, when in glib phrase we commend, and, perhaps, practice it."¹⁰⁵ When a person has received a letter of great importance and it contains passages difficult to understand, will he not solicit further explanation and more elucidation? This is precisely what the Christian exegete is doing when in his study of the Word he prays for illumination by the Holy Spirit, who ultimately is Author of the sixty-six books of the Old and New Testament canon.

J. Paterson Smyth suggested that Bible students, in their effort prayerfully to realize the Divine Presence, should turn to those passages to be studied and on the basis of the chief thoughts arising from them, formulate a prayer. Of this procedure, Smyth averred:

This latter, I think, is of the greatest importance. Bible study thus becomes a real communion with God. God and man are opening their hearts to each other. God is speaking to the man in His Word. The man is speaking back of the very things that God has told him.¹⁰⁶

The following prayers from the Bible are suggested by Smyth:

Lord, open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things
out of Thy Law.

Sanctify me through Thy truth, Thy Word is truth.

Blessed Spirit of truth, guide me into all truth.

Let the meditation of our hearts be acceptable in Thy sight,
O Lord, our Strength and our Redeemer.¹⁰⁷

Another spiritual qualification the exegete needs is a disposition to know the truth, that is, he must approach the Scriptures with the sole intent of ascertaining what is there. The Bible ought not to be approached with prejudices, or for the purpose of bolstering dogmatic presuppositions, or with a view of interpreting according to a preconceived theory.¹⁰⁸ G. Campbell Morgan claims this quest for truth involves being honest in one's attitude over against the Book. The Bible must be allowed to deliver its own message to the mind and heart of the interpreter.¹⁰⁹ In Burton's estimation there have been two schools of thought in the history of interpretation guilty of bias and prejudice: the traditionalistic or dogmatic method, which "assumes that the results must conform to the dogmas of an accepted body of doctrine or system of thought," and the rationalistic, which approaches the Scriptures with the supposition that only what conforms to man's reason is true and acceptable.¹¹⁰

An example of a dogmatic approach in interpretation may be cited from the translation by Charles Williams, recently reissued after being out of print for a number of years. An examination of all passages treating of the institution of the Lord's Supper, in the Evangelists' and Saint Paul's account in 1 Corinthians, reveals that Williams, influenced by his theological pre-suppositions with regard to the Sacraments, translated the *esti* of the Greek text with the word *represents*.¹¹¹ Thus he rendered Matt. 26:6-7 as follows:

While they were eating, Jesus took a loaf and blessed it; then He broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take this and eat it; it represents my body." He also took the cup of wine and gave thanks; then He gave it to them, saying, "All of you drink some of it, for this represents my blood which ratifies the covenant, the blood which is to be poured out for many for the forgiveness of their sins."¹¹²

An example of the rationalistic approach is the treatment accorded the books of the Bible containing miraculous accounts. Thus the book of Jonah is considered a piece of fiction,¹¹³ or symbolical literature,¹¹⁴ and not the record of an historical event that transpired in the days of Jeroboam II, even though Christ referred to the incidents in the book of Jonah as historical. Edgar Goodspeed's *A Life of Christ* is an example of a renowned New Testament scholar approaching the Four Gospels with rationalistic presuppositions, completely out of sympathy with their teachings.¹¹⁵ The result has been, to quote a recent critic, that Goodspeed's book "yields a radically different portrait of Jesus from that presented by the Gospel writers, who believed passionately that with God all things are possible."¹¹⁶

Another spiritual qualification essential for adequate interpretation is that of love. The person with an appetite for his food will derive more benefit from a meal than the individual who only eats of necessity. Even though the Bible is the meeting ground for many different interests, intellectual, scientific, historical, literary, emotional, or artistic, yet its main and dominant interest is religious. While the Book of Books touches on many phases of life, it is primarily a religious book. As such it can be properly appreciated only by the person who loves the things of God. The Biblical expositor should esteem the Scriptures as a series of love letters written by God to men.¹¹⁹ Jeremiah of old experienced this enthusiasm and exclaimed: "Thy Words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy Word was unto me the rejoicing of mine heart" (Jer. 15:16). Job also gave expression to this love: "Neither have I gone back from the commandment of His lips; I have esteemed the Words of His mouth more than my necessary food" (Job 23:12).

Correlated to that of love, another disposition of the mind is sympathy.¹²⁰ E. von Dobschuetz denominated it as "the principle of congeniality."¹²¹ This type of mental attitude requires the interpreter to place himself in the circumstances of the author, thereby enabling the exegete to read the books to a greater degree with the eyes of the men who were inspired to write them.¹²² No exegete can appreciate the excellencies and truths of any Biblical book who approaches it in the spirit of carping criticism. There can be no real comprehension if the student fails to surrender himself to the mood

of the writer, which involves a sympathetic attempt to see with the author's eyes and to experience his feelings.¹²³ Concerning this matter, Sweet asserted:

Literary appreciation is, of course, not the same as spiritual sympathy, but the two are akin, and in a great passage which is at once literary and spiritual they coalesce and work together.¹²⁴

When an interpreter approaches the Book in a harsh and alien mood, he immediately disqualifies himself to apprehend its inner quality. Much higher criticism has been guilty of an unsympathetic approach to the Scriptures.¹²⁵ Clifford, in his article on how to read the Bible, underscored the importance of sympathy when he averred: "Let me add in a brief closing word the eternal law that a definite spiritual aim and a strong sympathy with spiritual ideals are supremely necessary for the successful study of the Word of God."¹²⁶

A student may be able to parse and analyze the sentences of Milton's epics or admire the literary beauty of Wordsworth's lays, but if he is destitute of the poetical spirit, these productions will fail in their deepest ministry to his spirit. Just as it does not follow that a specialist in geology or botany will benefit aesthetically more from an afternoon's mountain climb than one whose nature is attuned to beauty, simplicity, purity, and God. When men treat the Bible as a mere literary production and come without adjusting the temper of their minds spiritually, or if they approach it in a selfish, worldly, unforgiving, or proud spirit, they will be like blind men who, with binoculars in hand, will stand unmoved before the landscape which lies spread beneath the summer sun.¹²⁷

The well-known Bible expositor F. B. Meyer, describing the need for sympathetic understanding, stated the case in this way:

Souls which love deeply best understand love. Pure eyes carry with them the flames of fire by which they see. Spirit recognizes and reads Spirit. . . . As the landscape expands before the view of the mountain climber, so does Scripture open up and unfold in precise proportion to our elevation in spirituality of character and our fellowship with God.¹²⁸

Germane to the two tempers of mind just discussed and requisite for adequate interpretation is that of expectancy. As a lover, re-

ceiving a letter from his beloved, opens it with feverish anticipation, so an exegete, planning to convey to others the message of God's love letters, must also approach his task "in a mood of tingling expectancy, knowing that God has some precious words for him, meeting the deepest need of that day. . . ." ¹²⁹ Those who come to the Scriptures in that frame of mind will have new insights into the Word. "Open Thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of Thy Law" (Ps. 119:18) implies that *thrilling discoveries* can be made by those regarding the Bible as a gold mine, many of whose precious veins remain to be explored.

Another disposition required by the Word of God, and, therefore, an important requisite for the exegete, is the spirit of awe with which the Bible interpreter must undertake his work. Thus the Psalmist said: "My heart standeth in awe of the Word." ¹³⁰ What is meant by "awe"? The Oxford Dictionary defines it as "dread, mingled with veneration, reverence or respectful fear; the attitude of the man subdued to profound reverence in the presence of supreme authority, moral greatness or sublimity, or mysterious sacredness." ¹³¹ How different the results of modern Biblical study and interpretation would have been if teachers, pastors, Bible commentators, and all who in any way endeavored to convey accurately the meaning of the facts and truths of the Bible, had stood in awe of God's Word! Acknowledging that the Bible possesses "supreme authority," "moral greatness," and "sublimity," they would have found the Scriptures surrounded by a halo of a "mysterious sacredness."

Closely allied to this spirit of awe is that of reverence, also demanded by the Scriptures of those endeavoring to interpret their meaning. "Reverence for the Lord is the beginning of knowledge." ¹³² It is with a trembling spirit that the God-fearing interpreter essays the explanation of the sacred text, because Isaiah says: "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at My Word" (Is. 66:2). If the interpreter realizes that God is speaking through the Bible, like Moses at the burning bush, he will take off his shoes from his feet and bow his head in subdued reverence for a proper understanding of the message it brings. Wright claims that the reverential frame of

mind is "one of the first duties imposed upon man in the presence of a divine revelation."¹³³

Akin to the spirit of reverence is that of meekness, which also has been set forth in the Scriptures as essential for correct exegesis. James exhorts his readers to "receive with meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). Archbishop Trench claims that the word "meekness" means "that temper of spirit in which we accept God's dealings with us as good and therefore without disputing or resisting. The meek and humble heart does not fight against God."¹³⁴ When a Bible exegete has this spirit, he will also say, as did Samuel: "Speak Lord; for Thy servant heareth" (1 Sam. 3:9). If the Word should reveal a spiritually cancerous condition in the life of him who is trying to impart the meaning and message to others, he will not argue with the Lord, but will submit himself to the verdict and rebuke of the Bible.

An additional qualification for the true exegete is the willingness to believe the Word. This requirement is condemned by many interpreters as unscientific, for in their opinion the expositor ought to approach the Bible without any presuppositions whatever. It is dishonest in their view to seek an interpretation with anything but an open mind. Thus over a half century ago the president of Buchtel College claimed that the grammatical and historical method of Biblical interpretation must be carried out without presumption. He asserted:

In like manner the Biblical interpreter, setting to work as an expert and according to a scientific method, must not allow any ancient tradition, modern belief, or personal interest to *govern* his procedure and predetermine his conclusion.¹³⁵

Many modern exegetes have suggested that the expositor's faith is a distorting factor in honest interpretation.¹³⁶ But as Filson has pointed out, such a predisposition is not erroneous, because a Christian does everything in life, and that includes the work of Biblical exposition, motivated by his religious beliefs.¹³⁷

The Bible presupposes the existence of faith on the part of the interpreter. "Through faith we understand," says the author of Hebrews (Heb. 11:3). "Reliance upon the authoritativeness of God's recorded Word is the bedrock requirement of one who would become a Biblically correct interpreter of the significance of that

selfsame Word."¹³⁸ The Bible exegete approaches with the firm conviction that the Bible has self-interpreting power. In trying to understand the meaning of the sixty-six books of the canon, other writings, however, have much value. Nevertheless, the Bible is to be accepted on its own authority. A Christian expositor is not dependent upon the explanation that the Church in the course of its history has given to a passage or to a book, as Piper contends.¹³⁹ Basil King's view that the Bible gets its authority from the individual must likewise be repudiated.¹⁴⁰ The failure to approach the Bible with a believing attitude has been responsible for so many false and soul-destroying explanations. The words of Christ come to mind in this connection: "I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes" (Matt. 11:25). Many scholars and interpreters spend much time in the study of the Scriptures, but the hours devoted to the Book are spent in the interest of gratifying their curiosity. The higher critical spirit with which so many approach Scripture results in its becoming a closed book instead of an open volume.¹⁴¹ The interpreter who goes to the Bible with preconceived theories of its development,¹⁴² or discounts the possibility of miracles, or denies the existence of the supernatural, or selects only those facts and statements which solely appeal to human reason, is guilty of approaching the Bible in an unbelieving spirit. He consequently will find seeming errors and contradictions, and considering it fallible, will not derive from the Fountain of Living Waters the refreshment that God intended for him and those for whom he is interpreting the Scriptures.

In Torrey's estimation, based on years of Biblical interpretation, the childlike mind is an essential condition for exegesis. To quote his own words:

It is a great point gained in Bible study when we are brought to realize that an infinite God knows more than we, that indeed our highest wisdom is less than the knowledge of the most ignorant babe compared with His, and when we come to Him as babes, just to be taught by Him, and not to argue with Him.¹⁴³

Finney listed among nineteen qualifications for Bible study, "a sense of ignorance and dependence on divine teaching," and "such humility as to be willing to expose your ignorance."¹⁴⁴

Closely akin to the foregoing disposition of faith is the willingness on the part of the exegete to obey the teachings of the Scriptures. It is only when a person has "cast down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and brought into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5) that he can find Christ and His salvation in the Bible. A surrendered will gives that clearness of spiritual vision which is absolutely necessary to an understanding of God's book. Saint Augustine, in *De Doctrina Christiana*, made the following suggestion to Bible interpreters:

Fear God, and seek to know His will, do not run in the face of Scripture when it strikes at your sins; be guided by the truth that God is love for His own sake, and man for God's sake; pray for strength and resolution that your heart may be fixed on things eternal; devote yourself to good works; and die to the world.¹⁴⁵

Insight into Bible truths is never independent of the obedient frame of mind, but always conditioned by conformity to its precepts, for as Christ said: "If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God or whether I speak of Myself" (John 7:17). From this utterance of the Lord it becomes clear that obedience, as Pierson terms it, is an "organ of spiritual revelation."¹⁴⁶ Herein is thus found a unique requisite for Scriptural exegesis, one which many interpreters do not possess. Minear asserts that only those obeying the Word of God will understand it.¹⁴⁷ What Pierson wrote many years ago is still true today:

Spiritual vision, like physical vision, is binocular: it depends on both reason and conscience. If the intellectual faculties are beclouded, the moral sense is apt to err in its decision and, if the conscience be seared, the reason is blinded.¹⁴⁸

Those who fail to abide by the precepts of the Bible eventually lose their power to see and understand its teachings.

The Bible exegete who has the moral and spiritual qualifications outlined in this paper will fulfill the requirements of the golden law, as set forth by Bengel, that prince among commentators: "An expositor should be like a well who brings no water into his source, but allows the water he finds there to flow without stoppage, diversion, or defilement."¹⁴⁹

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FOOTNOTES

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HOMILETICS

EISENACH OLD TESTAMENT SELECTIONS

Aug. 5	11 S. a. Tr.	Dan. 9:15-18	(God's Mercy Our Sole Support)
Aug. 12	12 S. a. Tr.	Is. 29:18-21	(The Glory of the Gospel)
Aug. 19	13 S. a. Tr.	Zech. 7:4-10	(God Fits Us for Work in His Service)
Aug. 26	14 S. a. Tr.	Ps. 50:14-23	(The Fruits of the Spirit in Worship and Behavior)

Sermon Study on Zech. 7:4-10 for the Thirteenth Sunday After Trinity

A complacent acceptance of religious truths and a smug performance of religious ritual—this is the spiritual malady probed by the Savior in the Gospel selection for the 13th Sunday after Trinity. The Epistle plainly declares that ceremony is meaningless unless the Spirit of God motivates the participant. In Zech. 7:4-10 these thoughts are brought together in a narrow compass, against the backdrop of a complex historical situation, in such a way that the man of God has an opportunity to preach a timely sermon on the dangers of ritualism, with an appeal for a Spirit-filled expression of all that is finest in the liturgical and doctrinal heritage of the organized Church of Jesus Christ.

The Prophet Zechariah was a contemporary of Haggai, according to Ezra 5:1 and 6:14. The latter prophesied from August 29 to December 18, 520 B.C. Zechariah came on the scene in November of the same year (Zech. 1:1). He continued his mission in the middle of February, 519 B.C. (1:7) and delivered the text under treatment on December 7, 518 B.C. (7:1), in the 4th year of the reign of Darius Hystaspis (521—486 B.C.).

It will be recalled that in 538 B.C. Cyrus had ordered a return of the captive population after his capture of Babylon. Ezra records the details. In 536 B.C. Cyrus granted permission to rebuild the Temple. Because of intertribal jealousy (Ezra 5:1-6) the work was suspended until Darius gave directions to proceed in 520 B.C., after a successful search for the original decree of Cyrus had been

made (Ezra 6:1 ff.). According to Ezra 6:15, the structure was finally completed in 516 B. C.

It was in connection with this building program that the Prophets Zechariah and Haggai uttered their oracles (Ezra 5:1 and 6:14). Haggai (1:2 ff.) suggests that the people needed much prodding and encouragement to proceed with the work. Their religious affections were buried in the rubble of a Temple whose material glory was gone forever, Ezra 3:12; Zech. 4:10 (in the reference to "the day of small things"). They had slight enthusiasm for the "small" task at hand. They saw little of the hand of God in the enterprises of the moment.

During the past decades they had not, indeed, been found wanting in the observance of religious festivals. Faithfully they had been observing four special periods of fasting:

1. In memory of the destruction of Jerusalem, on the 7th or 10th day of the 5th month (Zech. 7:3; see also 2 Kings 25:8 ff.; Jer. 52:12).

2. In memory of the day that the Babylonians had broken through the walls of Jerusalem (Zech. 8:19, the 4th month; on the 9th day, Jer. 39:2).

3. In memory of Gedaliah's assassination, on the 3d or 24th day of the 7th month. (Zech. 7:5; 8:19; see also 2 Kings 25:25; Jer. 41:1 ff.)

4. In memory of the day that marked the beginning of the siege of Jerusalem, on the 10th day of the 10th month (Zech. 8:19; see 2 Kings 25:1).

Despite the people's careful observance of these days of national mourning, Yahweh appeared to evidence little concern for the community, and Zechariah's glowing accounts of the glory of the Messianic age (chapters 1—6) remained disappointingly unfulfilled.

To express their disappointment, the people dispatched a deputation to the priests and prophets (Zech. 7:3), disguising their complaint against Yahweh in the form of a question: "Shall we continue to observe the anniversary of Jerusalem's destruction?" (Cp. Is. 58:3 for a similar instance.)

THE TEXT IN DETAIL

V. 4. It is significant that a Prophet of Yahweh, not the priests, answers the question. As the context indicates, the priests are incapable of analyzing Judah's fundamental problem, since they themselves are partially responsible for her spiritual disease. Moreover, since it is a problem embracing a frustration of the Spirit's will to work in people, Yahweh must give the answer Himself. The people have faulted Yahweh. Yahweh, from His transcendent vantage point, states the truth of the matter — Yahweh has a case against *them*. The self-deceptive nature of sin necessitates an *inspired* word.

Yahweh tells the Prophet to speak to "*all the people of the land and to the priests.*" The fact that He includes the priests implies that they, as the spiritual leaders of the people, have failed in their mission to interpret correctly the mind of Yahweh. The people, on the other hand, have suffered it to be so (cp. Jer. 5:31, and see the numerous references to the people's guilt under the word "people" in the concordances, with special reference to Isaiah and Jeremiah). There has been a steady spiritual decline, and both laity and ministry are faulted.

The precise nature of this decline is expressed in vv. 5 b and 6. The people have asked one question. Yahweh counters with two. The first (v. 5) expresses the major deficiency in their religious observance. The second (v. 6) states the actual facts in the case. The contrasting emphasis in the pronouns of the phrase: "Did ye at all fast unto *Me*, even to *Me*?" and those of the concluding words: "Did not *ye* eat and (*ye*) * drink?" bears out the nature of Yahweh's complaint. In effect, Yahweh is asking the people and the priests: "In all this ritual were you keeping *Me* in mind? Were you aiming at a more complete fulfillment of *My* will? Were you at all concerned that in these disasters you were commemorating *I* might have had reason to express *My* dissatisfaction with *you*? Was your fasting designed to catch *My* signals?" Then with the other question Yahweh answers: "Was not your eating and drinking merely the observance of your mealtimes?" The rhetorical device

* Literally: "Are not *ye* the eaters and *ye* the drinkers?" The A. V. expresses the emphasis correctly through the reflexive pronouns.

employed carries the full weight of devastating irony. Despite the fact that the words contain no mention of fasting, but of feasting, it is precisely the fasting that Yahweh criticizes. In effect He says: "Just as little as you can call the interval between your breakfast and your lunch a time of fasting, so little can you call this ritualistic fasting a religious observance" (cp. 1 Cor. 8:8).

The Prophet aims to point out, then, that the people and the priests, through their rituals, had made a pretense of a union between themselves and Yahweh, though there was no evidence of God's Holy Spirit at work in their lives. Their religious forms were ritualistic double talk, an ecclesiastical smoke screen sent up by the priests to conceal unsundered hearts (cp. Zeph. 3:13, "a deceitful tongue"). Worldliness, materialism — that was their malady (cp. Hag. 1:4, 9). And with a materialistic worship Israel and Judah had sought to conceal their materialistic living. So worldly were they that Amos, in a scathing indictment, points out that they could scarcely wait for the festival day to end so that they could pursue their material concerns (Amos 8:5).

In v. 7 the Prophet proceeds to offer a solution. It lies imbedded in the message of the "*former Prophets*." Among them would be numbered such notables as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Hosea, and Zephaniah.

Zechariah hints that by listening to the "*former Prophets*" Jerusalem might have remained inhabited. It is not necessary to read at length in the "*former Prophets*" to determine that their message consisted primarily in a denunciation of ritualism. (See, e. g., Is. 1: 11 ff.; Jer. 6:19-20; Amos 5:21 ff.) This ritualism reached a height in the time of the prosperity mentioned in v. 7, as the rapid succession of Prophets indicates.

The period of struggle, which witnessed the harnessing of great spiritual forces to effect the stabilization of Israel as a nation in Palestine, was climaxed with a period of restful security (cp. 1 Kings 4:20). This incidental reference in the First Book of Kings marks the turning point in Israel's history and in Judah's destiny. Within a few chapters Solomon's sterling prayer and his notorious mixed marriages are recorded (1 Kings 8 and 11). From then on it is decline. The spiritual forces which made material

achievements possible were deemed unnecessary or at best unimportant. The struggle for national recognition, which makes men brothers whether they would or not, is superseded by a culture of individual concern. Hence the repeated references to injustice, oppression, and lack of mercy in the former Prophets, as in the 9th verse of the text under treatment.

With slight expenditure of mental effort the road to ecclesiastical snobbery, separatism, and unbearable legalism could easily be traced. Religion consists finally in social respectability. The young lawyer confronted by Christ was certainly a product of his nation's century-old decline into ritualism, for he thought that a complacent recitation of "Thou shalt love the Lord, Thy God . . ." implied spiritual success.

Ritualism, or the equation of ritual observance with *moral* achievement, ultimately induces reaction in either of two directions. The one leads to pietism, the other toward liberalism, with a total disgust for the ancient creeds and their archaic expression. The baby is usually thrown out with the bath in contemporary haste. Or, in a last ditch defense, the old ritualism may take to itself "seven worse devils," and then a Christ is crucified. On the surface the problem poses a dilemma, for both pietism and liberalism lead their devotees to a subtler ritualism. The solution lies in the message of the "former Prophets."

The Prophet Zechariah is admittedly conservative. He recognizes the inadequacy of current religious life, but he does not fault the creed of Judaism for the lack of deeds. Rather he bids the priests reappraise their techniques in diagnosing and prescribing spiritual cures. Man's external environment may change, but, whatever form it takes, it substantially represents the sum total of all the spiritual resources or lack of spiritual resources of the individuals embraced in that culture. The root of man's problem is always sin — man out of contact with the living God, but the form it takes and the capacity for camouflaging vary with the particular culture involved. And for the solution of the problem the answer is perennially the same — the atonement wrought by Jesus Christ, whereby the life of the Spirit is channeled through the individual into his environment. Contemporary culture, therefore, does not

need new creeds, but it does need to remove the debris of ritualistic intellectualism associated with such cardinal doctrines as the Virgin Birth, the Inspiration of Holy Scripture, the Deity and Humanity of Christ, the Atonement, the Resurrection, the Ascension, and the Coming Judgment. Zechariah indicates that the former Prophets must be consulted to determine the vital significance of these and other doctrines in the life of the individual. In short, the ritual and doctrine of the Church must be viewed as springboards for action, not as the terminal point.

Vv. 9 and 10 express the objectives that ought to be attained through religious doctrine and ritual. The lack of these virtues would correspondingly indicate that ritual has declined into ritualism. It is to be noted that these words are the express will of Yahweh (v. 8). Mitchell, in the *I. C. C.* series, supposes an interpolation here. The point, however, is that the following words do not only express the mind of the "former Prophets," but the plan and purpose of Yahweh in choosing Judah as His people, as is indicated by the fact that expressions such as "judgment" and "mercy" involve *covenant* considerations. It is not mere social theory, then, that the Prophets propounded; for it is Yahweh, who speaks to His people, and *Yahweh is the God of the covenant*. Judah has cut herself off from the life of the Spirit by forgetting the significance of the covenant. Peter attacks a similar problem in the Christian community (1 Pet. 1:22). We might paraphrase what he says: "Remember, you have become believers to express an unfeigned love toward one another. Do not fail, then, to express it." And then the Apostle adds an exhortation to an earnest scrutiny of the Word of God, the converse of a ritualistic use of the same.

The *religious* nature of the call to a sense of social responsibility is clearly indicated, as already noted, in the three technical terms used by the Prophet. They are advocated on the basis of an assumption that Judah has learned to know her saving God. Hence in the homiletical treatment of these verses the atonement of Jesus Christ must motivate the practical considerations. Liberalism, with its denial of the blood atonement, is unable to give this motivation. Hence the abortive attempts in Reformed theology to legislate society into the Kingdom of God. The Prophet, were he alive

today, would consider the covenant relationship as a trigger which, when pulled, would release the full power of religious charity.

"Execute true judgment," or "judge a judgment of truth." The relation of the word "judgment" to Judah's social responsibilities is rooted in an understanding of God's dealings with His people. Yahweh's *mishpat* (judgment) is not merely a surface distinction between good and evil. His wrath at sin is linked with a love for the sinner. In Is. 30:18 ff. this connection between judgment and grace is clearly indicated. Hence what God does is His *mishpat*. Primary in His activity or *mishpat* is His elevation of the humble and resistance to the proud (cp. Job 5:11). Hence God shows *mishpat* especially to the oppressed, in that He champions their cause (see Deut. 10:18; Is. 1:17; 10:2; Amos 5:11, 15; 8:4 ff.; Jer. 5:28; 21:12; Ezek. 22:29). But God does *mishpat* and helps the oppressed so that man will also do *mishpat* (cf. Jer. 9:23-24). If a man does *mishpat*, then he shows that he understands and knows Yahweh (cf. Jer. 22:16). Without this practice his religion is merely intellectual and therefore ritualistic. In short, since God shows His *mishpat* especially in His treatment of widows and orphans and the oppressed in general, the believer must demonstrate the same consideration toward the poor and oppressed and socially inferior as toward his political, economic, and social equals. Justice and respect of persons are incompatible (see James 2:1 ff.; Acts 10:34).

But this still covers only one side of the motivation, the vertical relationship. God's *mishpat* involved the bringing together of a covenant people, and His *mishpat* can be trusted, for Yahweh is faithful (cp. Gen. 32:10: "truth," 'emet). Then those who compose the believing community must manifest right relationships with one another, relationships of mutual truth, or trust, for now they are brothers and sisters in a horizontal relationship. This means, to make the transfer to Christian terminology, that a Negro believer in Jesus is a brother and the white Christians must "judge a judgment of truth" by not making him sit in a rear pew or otherwise feel unwelcome. A Christian advertiser must state the facts of his product and refrain from appeals to fear and greed and lust. Merchants shall not "up" prices unnecessarily, and the buyer shall not patronize black markets. Judges shall show neither fear

nor favor, and citizens shall not bribe their officials or expect preferential treatment. The waitress and the society matron will be treated with equal politeness.

The word "mercy," *chesed*, is already involved in the term *mishpat*. But whereas *mishpat* suggests fair treatment, regardless of social position, *chesed* implies a readiness to extend help. Since those who enjoy the covenant relationship or membership in the communion of saints have experienced God's saving help, they are to recognize one another as brothers. Such knowledge of salvation is compounded of hope and confidence. Christianity's big word is *faith*. Hence Christian brothers and sisters are to have faith in one another. Faith in God means that we know He will respond to our needs. Therefore I must respond to the need of a brother who has a right to trust me for such help. But since God is ready to extend help to those outside the covenant or the Church, the Christian must show *chesed* not only to those within his religious sphere, but also to those who are without, as the Good Samaritan did. (On the close relationship between mercy and a covenant see 1 Sam. 20:8. On the close relationship of *chesed* with *mishpat* see Hos. 12:7; Jer. 9:23; Micah 6:8; Ps. 101:1.) This *chesed* will therefore extend to "the stranger" (v. 10). The D. P. population in America has witnessed this *chesed*. Pastors living in Army camp areas will have further opportunity to stress the importance of Christian hospitality, inasmuch as reports indicate that many soldiers and their brides are being charged outrageous rents for two-by-four apartments. Christian apartment owners might also be asked to re-examine their attitudes toward folks with children. Congregations, both in rural and in urban areas, should be encouraged to extend a more ready welcome to new families entering the community and the church.

The word "compassions," *rachamim*, concludes this study. Note the plural. *Rachamim* describes the strong feeling existing between parents and children, husband and wife, and between brothers (see Is. 63:15 f.; Hos. 2:19; Amos 1:11). *Mishpat* and *chesed* naturally lead to *rachamim*. Compassion is a necessary element in the life of one who is a member of the covenant family or of the Church. Compassion takes a person further even than *chesed*. The Good Samaritan showed *mishpat* in that he disregarded nationality,

and *chesed* when he stopped to relieve the beaten man. But he showed compassion in that he saw him through his trouble, to the extent of paying his hotel and hospital expenses; for the Samaritan realized that the man had been robbed. Similarly, one would display *mishpat* by extending the widow as fair a treatment as that accorded the most influential citizen; one would manifest *chesed* by giving her an opportunity to pay her debts through an extension of time rather than resort to foreclosure; but one would display compassion if one would determine the nature of her larder and the extent of her children's wardrobe. In Hos. 2:23 the verb is used, which the LXX in some MSS. renders with *agapao* (LXX 2:25). A compassion that is sensitive to the mental and spiritual effects of poverty, loneliness, sickness, and any other trouble—that is *agape*. Not a perfunctory ritualistic charity, but a love that is considerate, helpful, humbly recognizing God's great love through the atonement in Christ Jesus.

The extent of this brotherly affection is underscored in v. 10 b: "and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart." Again the thought of the covenant relationship in the word "brother." Again the Prophet has in mind the larger reality: God has only good thoughts toward His people, and the covenant people will prove their understanding of this fact by displaying similar interior attitudes toward one another. Oppressions have their root in such wrong attitudes as greed and envy. Thoughts of love and a profounder understanding of the doctrine of the communion of saints will promote a deeper appreciation of the Christian's communal responsibility. But, as always, the remembrance of God's covenant promises in the Christ are the source not only of the changed attitude, but also of the believer's action. The Christian's realization of what he is finds fortification in the Sacraments. Through them he is reminded, and sincere remembrance is the Holy Spirit's opportunity. Thus the rituals and forms of worship and doctrinal expressions of the church achieve their goal.

HOMILETICAL TREATMENT

The fundamental thought of the text is simple enough: Religious observance means nothing unless God's objective of a Spirit-filled life is kept constantly in mind.

The element of formalism will certainly receive extensive treatment, but the sermon must concentrate on the contemporary scene, especially the signs of ritualism in the local congregation and the worship of the individual. Such signs are not lacking. One has only to note the slogan "Work for the Church" and the accompanying dissatisfaction with those who "do not work for the church"—the thought of *working for and with God* is too often lacking; or the reluctance to adopt new forms or practices, such as the use of the individual Communion cup; or pride in meeting a local or synodical budget while luxury and competitive buying continues and larger areas of stewardship remain unexplored; or pride in a cavernous church structure while the Sunday school meets in the air raid shelter; or in the inability to pray without set forms or to speak of the faith that is within one; or in the psychological responses of the individual to unpleasant circumstances so that a feeling of guilt initiates interior pain, indicating a circuitous road to atonement; or etc., etc.

Since the local problem demands close attention, it is advisable to omit all reference to Roman Catholic formalism so as not to divert the hearers from self-examination. However, the approach must be evangelical. One must assume that the hearer desires to know what he can do about this tendency toward ritualism. The covenant terms in the 9th verse assist in this respect, because they lead naturally to a treatment of the Christian's rescue from the death of sin and therefore from vain traditions, through the Atonement, and thence to the purpose of God in redeeming him. The covenant, in turn, involved circumcision. This rite, together with the emphasis on "the Word of the Lord" and the message of the "former Prophets," suggests the importance of the Word and Sacraments as resources to achieve the Spirit-filled life.

The following titles and parts suggest timely presentations:

SUGGESTED OUTLINES

Don't Short-Change God

1. There is a temptation to make ritual an end in itself.
2. Let your religious observance motivate your whole life.

The Parable of the Two Congregations

They both had sound doctrine, but

1. The one was dead in formalism.
2. The other was alive in the Spirit.

Ritualism Can Kill a Church

1. The nature of ritualism.
2. The causes of ritualism (optional).
3. The fruits of ritualism.
4. The cure of ritualism.

FREDERICK W. DANKER

BRIEF STUDIES

Φόβος, ROM. 3:18

The words "There is no fear of God before their eyes" in this passage are a quotation from Ps. 36:1. Since fears are within us (2 Cor. 7:5), we raise the question: Can anyone in good English, Greek, or Hebrew speak of fear as being before the eyes? There is a blind spot in the commentaries on that point. For some time I thought the difficulty had to be solved by taking "before the eyes" to mean "I am conscious of" or "I feel." But Biblical usage is against that interpretation; it speaks of that which is extraneous to a person as being before his eyes: Psalm 18:24 (= 2 Sam. 22:25) speaks of David as being before the eyes of God; Psalm 5:5, of boasters before God; Psalm 101:7, of a liar before the Psalmist; Job 4:16, of a spirit before Eliphaz; Psalm 101:3, of a wicked thing which the Psalmist hates. The closest parallel is found in Psalm 26:3, where David says to the Lord, "Your kindness is before my eyes." Like this "kindness," the "fear of God" is something in God, and so it is "before the eyes" of man. That is why Brown-Driver-Briggs under *nagadh* say of Psalm 36:1 (this is the only direct support that I found): "He has no eye to discern God's awe-inspiring judgments."

We have been misled by the exclusively subjective meaning of the English word "fear." The Hebrew *pachadh* frequently means, not a feeling in the subject, but a frightening feature of the night (Ps. 91:5), of an enemy (Ps. 64:1), or of God who is angry with sin (Ps. 119:120); in this last case it is almost equivalent to ὀργή (Rom. 3:5). While the word "fear" should in such instances be replaced by a word like "terror" or "threat," I am retaining "fear" in the following passages in order to show how the context overrules the erroneous subjective element in our word "fear": "Don't be afraid of sudden *fear*" (Prov. 3:25); "hide from the *fear* of the Lord" (Is. 2:10; see also vv. 19, 21); "he who flees from the noise of the *fear* will fall into the pit" (Is. 24:18). (See also Job 3:25; 15:21; 22:10; Ps. 31:11; Jer. 48:44.) It is clear, then, that φόβος in the Septuagint rendering of Psalm 36:1 is not "awe, reverence," as Liddell & Scott assert; by the "fear of God" the Psalmist means a terrifying God whom the sinner fails to keep before his eyes.

When Paul quotes Ps. 36:1 in Rom. 3:18, he embodies the unaltered meaning of the Psalm in his letter. The genitive θεοῦ, which

Robertson (Grammar, p. 500) and Bauer (under φόβος) call objective, is subjective. Paul says to the world of Jews and Greeks (Rom. 3:9) that "God does not terrify them." The world, then and now, is closing its eyes to the God of Sinai, who is a consuming fire.

While the English word "fear" is incorrect, the Septuagint and Paul were within classical usage when they used φόβος for the "terror" of God. Liddell & Scott give instances from Sophocles, Herodotus, and Xenophon where the term means just that. A papyrus of 307—6 B.C. (Moulton and Milligan) seems to speak of "fears surrounding the Greeks." Φόβερος, used of horses or enemies, means "causing fear." Athena is called φοβεριστράτη, the scarer of armies. The simple verb φοβέω is used of camels frightening horses. It is significant that the New Testament uses only the passive, φοβέομαι, with the meaning "fear," as if it meant "to be frightened by a φόβος."

Where else in the New Testament does φόβος have this meaning? Obviously in Rom. 13:3 (Abbott-Smith are probably mistaken when they call this a case of metonymy). Also definitely in 2 Cor. 5:11 when we consider the background of judgment presented in v. 10. Φόβος may also have this meaning in Heb. 2:15, where "terror" as something inherent in death and not merely our "fear" of death makes us slaves (for evidence that points to this meaning see especially Ps. 55:4; Hos. 13:14; also 2 Sam. 22:5-6; Ps. 18:4-5; 116:3; Prov. 13:14; 14:27). This meaning of φόβος also fits the phrase in 1 John 4:18, ὁ φόβος κόλασιν ἔχει; but if that is the meaning, verses 17-18 will have a different cast.

W. F. BECK

St. Louis, Mo.

THEOLOGICAL OBSERVER

THOUGHTS FOR INDEPENDENCE DAY

The Fourth of July is for Americans a holiday of supreme significance. It marks the occasion when the colonists in 1776 dissolved the political ties which had bound them to England and became an independent people in the family of nations. On this day, Christians of our land will however also thank God for one of the greatest blessings He bestowed on our land, the blessing of religious liberty. We easily take this blessing for granted. We find it difficult to understand why this privilege is being withheld from the people of other countries. Yet the plain fact is that there are many countries in which this freedom, which we have rightly come to regard as basic, is not known and where the tyranny that denies it to men is imposed with the full force of the law. What is happening in such countries is vividly brought to our attention in an article titled "Religious Freedom" and published in *The Australian Lutheran* (March 7). The author of this article, Dr. J. Darsow, writes as follows:

"Under the heading, 'What Protestants Cannot Do in Spain,' a religious journal recently stated: They cannot lawfully do anything that would be regarded as the public practice of their religion or its promulgation and extension. They cannot have a church building that looks like a church or has any recognizable external symbols to suggest that it is a church. They cannot have a church anywhere except on a narrow side street. Protestant churches are not allowed to make any public announcement of their services. No bulletin board is permitted. Neither the name of the church nor even the bare word, 'Church,' can appear externally on the building.

"They cannot really publish anything—that is, print it and offer it for general circulation outside their own circle. During 1950 they petitioned Franco for permission to 'print Bibles, hymn books and devotional and other theological literature restricted to use in their churches.' Such permission was not granted.

"They cannot open a new church, or reopen an old one that has been closed, or hold services in a private house, without first securing specific permission from the authorities. Churches closed in the early stages of the Franco regime are still closed. There is a list of twenty congregations still waiting for permission to hold services in private houses. Local authorities which are completely under the control of the Roman bishops are the most difficult of all to agree to such permissions.

"They cannot conduct schools even for their own children. For Protestant children the only choice is between Catholic schools and public schools in which Catholic religious instruction is part of the compulsory course. They compel Protestants who had received Roman Catholic baptism in infancy (i. e., converts or the children of converts) to come under the Roman jurisdiction for marriage. They cannot go through a civil marriage without permission of the local priest, who almost invariably refuses.

"The authorities refuse to grant them any of the benefits from 'public social assistance' except upon conditions impossible for them to meet conscientiously. Protestants are not permitted to bury their dead with religious services in civil cemeteries with any assurance of security from interruption and desecration.

"Then consider the following item: 'At the Khyber Pass, on the Pakistan-Afghanistan border, matters of religious as well as of political significance claim attention. No Christian worker is permitted to cross the border into the land of the Afghans. Save for a service from the Book of Common Prayer read by the British ambassador for Western residents in Kabul, the capital city, no expression of Christianity is allowed in Afghanistan. A few colporteurs, posing as business men, have gained entrance in the past, but as soon as their real purpose was discovered they were expelled.'

"It will be seen that in the one case it is a so-called Catholic country that will not tolerate any other faith, and in the other a Mohammedan. The attitude of these two countries is typical of others of the same religious persuasion. But it should be noted that Afghanistan is in very fact a Mohammedan country, whereas Spain is not actually a Catholic country. A Roman Catholic news service quotes the Archbishop of Valencia, in Spain, as having said in the course of a statement in *Ecclesia*, the official organ of Spanish Catholic Action: 'The immense majority of the workers are not with the Church; they do not love the Church; they even hate the Church.' As most of the Spanish people are workers, this statement shows how the Church stands with the masses of that nation. It follows that the intolerant Spanish laws referred to above are being enforced in the interest of a minority — the Roman Church."

We join in the petition with which Rev. Darsow concludes his article, "Lord, preserve to us the freedom of conscience, of religion, and of the exercise of religion that is ours!" But we add, "Lord, grant also to the people in Spain, Afghanistan, and other countries the priceless boon of religious liberty."

P. M. B.

EUROPEAN FREE CONFERENCES IN 1951

Free conferences will again be held between theologians of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and European theologians. According to present plans the American theologians will meet with Lutheran theologians in England, with representatives of the Alsatian Free Church at Strassbourg, and with pastors and theologians of the German Lutheran churches. Two such conferences are to be held at Bad Boll in Southwestern Germany and one conference with the theologians of the Russian Zone in Berlin. The following program was prepared by American theologians and approved by the representatives of the participating German theologians.

Theme: *"The Living Word of Christ and the Response of the Congregation"*

(Der redende Christus und die hoerende Gemeinde)

Topic for the First Day: *God's Activity as Revelation.*

First Essay: Topics in the realm of natural revelation, such as God's activity in nature and in history; God's judgments and visitations; creation, conservation, government. In this activity God reveals Himself as the *Deus absconditus*.

Second Essay: God's Revelation in the history and institutions of Israel.

This is a progressive unfolding of the *Heilsgeschichte* as seen in the Abrahamic promise, the history of the covenant people, the sacrificial cultus. In His activity in the *Heilsgeschichte* God is the *Deus revelatus*.

Topic for the Second Day: *Christ and the Scriptures.*

First Essay: The Old Testament is Christ's witness concerning His person and work.

Second Essay: The incarnate Jesus Christ is the *Word* of God and God's final revelation to man.

Topic for the Third Day: *Christ Addresses His Congregation in His Threefold Office.*

First Essay: Christ's prophetic office.

Second Essay: Christ's sacerdotal office.

Third Essay: Christ's royal office.

Topic for the Fourth Day: *The Word of God and the Holy Scriptures, the Doctrine of Inspiration.*

First Essay: A definition of Inspiration; the revelation is necessarily laid down in the Scriptures; Inspiration is not an *a priori*

doctrinal formulation, but an article of faith; Christ's attitude toward the Scriptures.

Second Essay: How does Scripture manifest itself as the Word of God? It does this in its perspicuity, authority, sufficiency, infallibility, objectivity, and in its collative and effective power, since Christ is there speaking and acting.

Topic for Fifth Day: *Scripture as a Living Witness.*

First Essay: The Holy Scriptures as *viva vox evangelii*.

Second Essay: Historical criticism, de-mythologizing theory.

Topics for Sixth Day: *The Living Word of Christ and Contemporary Proclamation.*

First Essay: In what way does Christ speak through the ministry today?

Second Essay: In what way does Christ speak through the Church today?

The general theme and the individual topics were selected in the light of the tensions which came to the surface in previous free conferences. It becomes evident that the two partners in the conferences approached the term "the Word of God" differently. The theological situation in America compelled the theologians of the Missouri Synod to emphasize the inerrancy of Scripture. This emphasis may have created the impression as though the Missouri theologians approached a theory of Inspiration which is similar to the Roman Catholic and the Calvinistic theory and which is apt to view the Scriptures merely as a series of independent dogmatical statements. Due to the influence of dialectical theology, the German theologians had emphasized the dynamic character of the Scriptures. This divergent orientation may at times have resulted in a tension, at least in the danger that the representatives "spoke past each other." The committee felt, furthermore, that in distinction from Reformed theology the Lutheran concept of the Word will undoubtedly play a role not only in American Lutheranism, but in world Lutheranism. It is in this area where Lutheranism must make a distinct contribution to theological thinking on the ecumenical level.

It is evident from the program that there is one leading thought running through the entire program, namely, the Christological basis for all theological discussion. All discussions are to center about Christ and His relation to the *ecclesia*. The committee is of the conviction that the program for 1951 is extremely rich and meaningful. We sincerely trust that all participants in the proposed free conference will be enriched and strengthened in their faith.

Dr. Behnken has asked the following to serve as "the Bad Boll commissioners"; Dr. H. Harms is to serve as chairman; Professors P. M. Bretscher, M. J. Naumann, and Walter Roehrs as the theological discussion leaders; Dr. A. H. Grumm will serve as lecturer on pastoral and congregational methods; Professor Walter Buszin, whom Concordia Publishing House has asked to contact the significant musical publishers, will also participate in the discussions. F. E. M.

LET NOT THE CHURCH BE CHARGED

Under this heading Dr. H. Hamann, in the *Australasian Theological Review* (Vol. XXI, No. 4, December, 1950) discusses the question how much the Church owes to students who prepare themselves for the pastoral or teaching ministry.* The writer is not opposed to any support given to needy students. Nor does he object to the principle of keeping the charges for board and other services as low as possible. But he believes that it is not in keeping with the best interests of the Church to transfer the "welfare state" idea to the student body at its colleges. In particular, he is at variance with a proposal with which recently the Toowoomba Convention of the Australian Church had to deal. According to this memorial there was to be returned to theological students, upon graduation, all money paid by them (or their parents) for board during the years of preparation. He adds a word of praise for such parents as "count themselves happy in supplying workers for their Church at some sacrifice to themselves" and

* *The Australian Lutheran* (March 7, 1951) reports that on March 7, 1951, Professor Hamann celebrated his silver jubilee as professor at Concordia College, Adelaide, S. A. Together with Rev. G. Kuechle he was installed by President Janzow in the Flinders Street Lutheran Church on March 7, 1926. While Dr. Hamann was called as the fifth professor at Concordia College, Pastor Kuechle was to serve as city missionary for the Port Adelaide and coastal districts. In January, 1928, Pastor Kuechle, now serving a congregation in Cleveland, Ohio, returned to the United States. Professor Hamann, however, continued his teaching ministry with signal success. Since 1939 he has been principal, or headmaster, of the school. His profound, scholarly articles in the *Australasian Theological Review* have extended his influence also beyond Australia. In Australia Dr. Hamann has done much to clarify doctrinal issues, and he has performed most valuable work on his Church's Commission on Doctrinal Unity. At his induction as professor President Janzow preached on the text: "The blessing of the Lord be upon you; we bless you in the name of the Lord" (Ps. 129:8). As the *Australian Lutheran* greeted the esteemed professor with this solemn benediction, so shall this be our greeting and benediction as we rejoice with him and his friends at the blessings which God bestowed upon his long and rich ministry of forty-four years (1907—1951). May the Lord of the Church extend his service for many more years to His glory.

stresses the thought that whenever students or their parents are able to provide for the expenditure at college, the Church should not offer assistance that is not needed.

He draws this conclusion especially from 1 Tim. 5:3-16, where St. Paul makes provision of congregational support for such widows only as are destitute or in need. Some commentators hold that the official position of these widows was analogous to that of the elders, but whether this is true or not, the Apostle's advice is clearly set forth in v. 16, where he writes: "If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed." Dr. Hamann adds: "These widows, too, the congregation should not be expected to support while there were relatives upon whom that duty naturally devolved."

To the question "What has the support of widows to do with the training of church workers?" Dr. Hamann replies: "More than appears on the surface; for a careful study of St. Paul's words in vv. 4, 8, and 16 will probably convince most theologians that he is not merely formulating a principle for the occasion in hand, but is applying to that occasion a principle of much wider and more general validity. It is this, put very briefly: Christians should not expect the Church to do for them—and this includes members of their family—what they can well do themselves. This is, of course, also an axiom rooted in the normal Christian's sense of equity and responsibility; that is, in the last analysis, in the law of Christian love. The Church is not to be 'charged' or 'burdened' to save the pocketbooks of those to whom God has given ample means."

The principle here set forth is one of the greatest importance also for us in America, where socialized views of free and ready help by some higher power are imperceptibly being absorbed by workers of all kinds, including church workers. It is true, college courses for the pastoral or teaching ministry today demand much more by way of expenditure than they did many years ago when "things were still cheap," but the student who ruggedly works his way through college and parents who take pride in seeing their sons through college without church help, will derive from their self-sacrificing devotion lasting benefits in self-reliance and self-respect which they will never regret. To help persons who need no help is certainly as harmful (if not more so) as not to help those who need help. As a rule, too, it is not the student or parent in the higher bracket that too readily sues for assistance.

J. T. MUELLER

PROBLEMS OF A TRANSLATOR

The Ecumenical Review (April) contains an English translation of Professor Peter Brunner's penetrating German article on the Toronto declaration regarding the nature of the Church. What interests us, at this moment, is not the article itself, though we sincerely commend the Heidelberg professor's article for careful reading, but the difficulties which the translator of the article encountered and which he describes in the preface of his translation. We are submitting his analysis for two reasons: 1. it demonstrates how difficult it is for one not thoroughly trained in the German language to interpret it correctly; 2. it sheds light on problems encountered by the serious translator of the Holy Scriptures. The significant paragraphs in the preface are the following:

"The title of the article by Dr. Brunner is *Pneumatischer Realismus*, which we have translated 'The Realism of the Holy Spirit.'

"German theology has the advantage that it is able to make use of words derived from the Greek *pneuma*, from the Teutonic *Geist*, and from the Latin *spiritus*. Contemporary English is content to use only derivatives from the Latin; these have to cover a very wide range of meaning, and often the precise sense is given only by the context. This does not cause difficulty to the English reader, but may perplex others, who are perhaps not sure of the exact difference between 'spiritual' and 'spirituous.'

"In this article, Prof. Brunner makes use of all three sets of terms. *Spiritualistisch* is used in a somewhat pejorative sense; 'spiritual' is not infrequently used in modern English to indicate the higher faculties in man, without any specifically religious reference. *Geistlich* or *geistig* refers to the inner spiritual experiences of men, which may be, and often truly are, an experience of the working of God, inwardly felt and realized. *Pneumatisch* occurs where there is direct reference to the operation of the Holy Spirit. How are these distinctions to be represented in English, without either the creation of an intolerable ecumenical jargon, or the wearisomeness of lengthy paraphrase?

"'Pneumatic' or any such form is automatically excluded, since to the ordinary intelligent reader it suggests nothing but motor-tires or workmen's drills. Again, it is unfortunate that modern English has been impoverished by the loss of an excellent and classical word. In the sixteenth century, no one would have had any doubts as to the meaning of the phrases 'ghostly counsel,' 'our ghostly enemy.' But we have felt that to translate the title of this article 'Ghostly Realism' might have seemed strange even in these days of the efflorescence of the Christian paradox.

"We have found it best to fall back upon a simple typographical device. In most contexts, 'spiritual' has been used to represent *geistlich*. Where the author has written *pneumatisch*, we have rendered this 'of the Spirit' or 'in the Spirit,' sometimes with and sometimes without the adjective 'Holy.' Where this has seemed clumsy, we have used 'Spiritual,' the use of the capital indicating that the reference is directly to the work of the Holy Spirit, and not to the results of His work as inwardly experienced by men. It is hoped that this approximate method may be found both fair to the writer and intelligible to the readers of the article."

The translation which follows the preface does full justice to Professor Brunner's article, and we cannot help complimenting the translator for a difficult job well done. In fact, the translator has, without of course intending to do so, further persuaded us that a bit of the ingenuity displayed by the translator of Professor Brunner's article might prove eminently useful to those engaged in the difficult task of translating the Holy Scriptures. In this notion we are even further confirmed by the splendid articles in the April issue of *The Bible Translator* (published by The United Bible Societies, London), in which we read with much interest those titled "Lexical Problems in Shipibo Mark," "The Semitic Background of the New Testament," and "Psuchee in the New Testament." There is no last word in any translation of the Bible. Therefore the job of the lexicographer and interpreter must continue to the end of time. Therefore, also, no student of the Holy Scriptures will ever be able to express in his language the full meaning of the sacred text. It is rather said of him, "His delight *is* in the Law of the Lord; and in His Law *doth* he meditate day and night." But doing this, he has the promise, "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

P. M. B.

HAS THE CHURCH FAILED?

The "Information Service of the Lutheran World Federation" (published at No. 17, route de Malagnou, Geneva, Switzerland) of March 12, 1951, publishes a letter by a layman in which this apparently very intelligent and conscientious Christian replies to the charge, so frequently made in our day, that "the churches have failed." What he writes is worth considering by all earnest and honest church members. Quoted in part, he says:

When you say: "The Church has failed," you mean that the churchmen, the clergy, including the top leaders, have failed. But the Church

does not only consist of the clergy. Should not you lawyers and sociologists be the first people to know that the clergy are no more than the officials of a community? They can no more exist without the community than the latter can exist without them. What is "the Church"? *We* are the Church, and we have no right to criticize it without criticizing ourselves as well. We complain when churches become clericalized and dead, and we are right. But whose fault is it? Is it the pastors' fault? They suffer more than others from developments such as these. Is it the laymen's fault, because we have not done all that we should? The answer is very simple and has been given many times: every church, as every community, has the officials it deserves. Because this simple truth is being ignored, democracy is dying, and totalitarianism is growing and menacing to strangle humanity. Those who blame everything on the officials prepare the way for this process. The officials have failed because citizens and laymen fled from their responsibility. . . .

Insofar as churches are human communities, there can, of course, be no doubt that they have failed and that they will always fail. All that is human always fails, whether it be a totalitarian state or a church body that trusts only in human organization. All things that are based only on men show up the frailty of man. . . . But a lawyer like you should know that churches are more than simply human organizations and that, though "churches" may fail, this does not mean that the Church has failed. The Church does not fail or succeed, for it is not an institution which succeeds and fails according to the abilities of its officials. The Church of which the Third Article of the Creed speaks, can neither fail nor conquer the world by human power. It is something radically different from the "churches" and yet connected with them on a level which your criticism does not reach. . . . It is not the "churches" that have failed, even less the "Church," nor the officials or representatives, but every single one of us, every layman and every pastor and — last but not least — every critic.

J. T. MUELLER

THE LUTHERAN FREE CHURCH AND THE UNION QUESTION

Under this heading, Rev. T. O. Burntvedt, in the *Lutheran Outlook* (April, 1951) states with pleasing frankness and adequate detail why the Lutheran Free Church does not favor organic union with other Lutheran church bodies. It is, of course, not opposed to a Lutheran church federation, nor are its resolutions on Lutheran union of 1949 unalterable. But, as the writer states, in their origin, their doctrines, their polity, and their general view of large church organizations the Lutheran Free Church people find so many things that are irreconcilable with organic church union that they cannot favor it now, though they may be called isolationists, doctrinal indifferentists, pietists, and

what not. In the past their associations with other Lutheran groups have not been happy experiences. Their church polity aims at decentralization of power and is opposed to domination of minorities by majorities. Their special emphases on evangelism, lay activity, simplicity of worship, and the like are such as would rather separate this group than unite it with others. Finally, it is the tradition of the Lutheran Free Church not to participate in doctrinal discussion with other Lutherans, since it holds that unreserved acceptance of the Lutheran Confessions constitutes a sufficient basis for fellowship and co-operation. The article closes with the words:

"Finally it should be stated that we have pastors and lay people who are not convinced that one Lutheran Church in America, organized into one organic body, is the pearl of great price which we at all cost should seek to obtain. Neither are they convinced that Christ had one such organized church body in mind when in His high-priestly prayer He prayed that they all might be one. These people point to the Church of Rome as one organized body, and they doubt that another similar organization of Lutheran Churches or Protestant Churches is desirable."

While many may not agree with everything Dr. Burntvedt says in his brief for his Church, all certainly should admire the candor with which he states and defends his views. If that candor prevails in all Lutheran churches in our country, then the chances of church union are far greater than if fear of public opinion should force individuals or church groups to hypocritical silence. In the last paragraph, which we have quoted in full, there are expressed a number of convictions which also many Lutherans outside the Lutheran Free Church share. Totalitarian Rome, with its almost uncanny organization, may well serve as a warning to Protestants who see the salvation of Protestantism merely in greater organization and more effective centralization. There can be no doubt, too, that Christ in the words recorded John 17:20-21 prayed for the realization of the *Una Sancta*, the ingathering of God's elect through faith in Christ, and not for any external, organized church body, upon which the Apostles in the New Testament never insisted. They always left intact the basic unit of congregation and pastor and inculcated only unity in doctrine and church practice.

J. T. MUELLER

CHURCH AND STATE IN BERLIN-BRANDENBURG

The Ecumenical Review (April) contains a summary report by Bishop Otto Dibelius of Berlin on the problem which the Evangelical Church of Germany has had to face within the last year in its relation

to the civil authorities. From his report we are submitting the following thought-provoking paragraphs:

"We all know with what force the waves of political development have broken in upon the domain of our Church. The biggest of all the political questions in recent months does, of course, affect us only very indirectly: that is, whether and to what extent the West of Germany is to come within the great arming of the western world. Our role has been limited to the pronouncements of the Council of the Evangelical Church in Germany on this question. The Council has never said anything but what the Church is in duty bound to say as a Church of Jesus Christ, namely, the most desperately serious exhortations to peace and reunion. I repeat, bound by an inner compulsion. It is not the task of the Church to assist a municipality in the posting of its police, but it is its task to help see that police action needs to be resorted to as little as possible. In the same way, it is no affair of the Church to decide whether a country needs armed forces or should allow itself to be integrated into military schemes covering the whole world, but it is the Church's duty to entreat the statesmen of the world not to let things get as far as bloodshed, and for its own part foster a spirit which will make it inconceivable for men once again to take another's lives by the million, simply because inter-State competition for dominion deems it necessary.

"The world is today falling apart into two great spheres of power. . . . We can understand that the political authorities demand of our German nation that it shall take a decision. But it is not the Church's responsibility to take political decisions. It must never forget that on both sides there are human beings, men for whom the Lord Christ died, as much for the one as for the other. It must concern itself with seeing whether the Gospel can be preached in freedom on both sides, and truth and love all over the world break and hamper the evil counsels of human self-seeking.

"That does not mean that the Church must hold its peace, let alone give its assent, to everything that is going on in the world. But it does mean that the Church must not allow itself to be constantly overtaxed by the questions of political affairs; it must live to perform the duty laid upon it and it alone by its Lord and Master. . . .

"In a Christian church, personal abuse, as constantly levelled at us, must not provoke either irritation or surprise. Where assertions are made which are simply unfounded, they must be corrected, if it is worth it. But it is also laid down for us in the Sermon on the Mount that to be reviled is part of the blessedness of Christ's disciples. And

for Christians there can be absolutely no question of injured dignity, when our Lord has said, in the fifth chapter of St. John, that we are not to concern ourselves with honor before men, but with the 'honor that cometh from God only.' We shall therefore rejoice each time that we are able to extend a hand in friendship to those who have spoken ill of us, as if nothing had happened and without laying down any conditions. We have had occasion during these last few weeks to observe this Christian duty of ours, and hope that we may have it again in the future.

"That applies to our pastors, too. We do not, certainly, regard it as admissible that pastors should attack their own church leaders in the political press. That they have sufficient opportunity to do at our Synods and in our church periodicals, and the church administration has, I think, proved conclusively enough that it bears no grudge against any pastor or elder, who may make abundant and vigorous use of such an opportunity. If I have a request to make, it is only that such attacks should be directed as far as possible against myself and not against others of our governing body—only not in the political Press. That would be counter to what is written in I Corinthians 6. And the leaders of a church cannot show indulgence on that point.

"The other item is that for us who carry in our hearts a heritage from Martin Luther it is an obligation to maintain a relation of loyalty to those set in authority over us, even when the measures that they take may bear heavily upon us. It will therefore always be a satisfaction to us if we succeed in reaching agreement on any point with the Government to which we owe allegiance. And when we do not so succeed, at any rate nobody shall ever hear a disparaging or spiteful utterance concerning authority from us.

"But we cannot renounce the right to express in all frankness the things that weigh upon the Christian conscience, which those for whom we bear pastoral responsibility are not in a position to express for themselves. We believe, too, that we are thereby doing what is best for the State system. For without truthfulness and candor on both sides there can be no lasting fellowship between men."

The above carefully worded utterances by Bishop Otto Dibelius suggest that he and other church leaders in the Berlin-Brandenburg area find themselves in a very difficult position. Surely, one cannot help but breathe a prayer that the Lord of the Church might so resolve the tensions between East and West and Church and State that they will issue in peace and not in war, and that Christians in the East and in the West might lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.

P. M. B.

THE THEOLOGY OF NEWTON

Theology Today (April, 1951) reviews in connection with a book recently published on this subject,* the theology of Sir Isaac Newton. We read in the article: "It is well known that Newton wrote a number of essays on religious and Biblical subjects, but biographers have mostly ignored this side of this versatile career or taken them as the scattered musings of his old age. The editor of this latest account traces in his Introduction the history of these manuscripts, which for various reasons were not prepared for publication, and gives a brief discussion of certain emphases in Newton's theology. Selections from some of the more important of these writings are included in the volume.

"Theologically it appears that Newton was an anti-Trinitarian with leanings toward both the Arianism and Socinianism of his day. He felt that the 'homoousios' controversy in Nicaea in A.D. 325 introduced a false and misleading note. Implying a negative answer, he asked: '[Did] Christ send his apostles to preach metaphysics to the unlearned common people?' The Christological dispute was not understood at Nicaea, 'nor ever since.' And, he added, 'What cannot be understood is no object of belief.'

"Newton had no use whatever for Athanasius. He regarded the defender of orthodoxy as an unprincipled conniver, an ecclesiastical politician of the worst sort. In the religious issues of his own day Newton was a Protestant as over against Romanism and a Puritan as over against the Church of England. Although it has been repeatedly suggested that Newton owed much to the mystical writings of Jacob Boehme, the editor of this work doubts the connection.

"The significance of all this is not in the intrinsic value of the various theological essays. They are not particularly interesting or suggestive in themselves. The value of such a study as this is to confirm the many-sided genius of Newton who, in the midst of his most abstract mathematical problems, turned with enthusiasm and conviction to considerations of technical theological science. As a theologian, Newton was certainly not an important thinker. Perhaps the reason was that he never succeeded in relating in his own mind his scientific and his theological studies. 'Religion and philosophy [natural philosophy, i.e., science] are,' he wrote, 'to be preserved distinct. We are not to introduce divine revelations into philosophy nor philosophical opinions into religion.'"

* *Newton: Theological Manuscripts*. By H. McLachlan. Beacon Press, 25 Beacon St., Boston 8, Mass. \$1.75.

We shall not pass judgment on the last statement of the writer, for to us the last quotation from Newton seems to be correct. But the review of Newton's theological opinions is certainly worth noting. Christian apologetics often quotes Sir Isaac Newton as a scientist who was deeply religious and championed faith against unbelief. It is beyond doubt that he was not in agreement with modern materialistic nihilism, for very definitely he believed in a creative and sustaining divine Providence. But if the judgment of the writer based upon Newton's theological manuscripts is true, then also his case proves, as do so many others, that it is a matter of folly to appeal to any prominent scientist as such for verification of Christian theology. It is not his eminence as a scientist that makes true or false what he says; it is only when a scientist is a professed Christian believer that his opinions on doctrinal matters are of weight and worthy to be heard. There is no doubt that Newton was one of the most brilliant thinkers and scientists of our modern era; nevertheless, theologically he championed the shallow deism of his age and took issue with the doctrinal decisions of the Church on the flimsiest grounds. The Christian believer surely cannot respect the theological opinion of a person whose religious norm is so superficial a principle as this: "What cannot be understood is no object of belief."

J. T. MUELLER

BRIEF ITEMS FROM "RELIGIOUS NEWS SERVICE"

In an address to a Preaching Mission Workshop at Hamma Divinity School, Dr. Franklin Clark Fry told his audience that Protestants have placed too much emphasis on the preacher. He said: "It is the Holy Ghost who must do the preaching, through a minister submerged, made humble. . . . We Protestants in general have placed so much emphasis on the preacher as to leave little opportunity for the Holy Spirit to work. The plain and obvious result has been a dilution of our own effort and the prolific rise of the sects that proclaim the Holy Ghost to the exclusion of all else."

The National Federation of Lutheran Clubs adopted this platform at its recent convention in Indianapolis: (1) to develop and promote Christian fellowship; (2) to bring about closer co-operation among all Lutherans; (3) to foster and support public relations programs; (4) to promote and assist youth activities and charitable objectives; (5) to support and initiate movements to bring about better government and civic conditions.

The Federation stressed its intersynodical character by choosing an outstanding member of the United Lutheran Church, Dr. Clarence C. Stoughton, president of Wittenberg College, as Lutheran of the year, and by electing a Missouri Synod Lutheran, William Schmidt of Indianapolis, as its new president.

The Southern Baptist churches east of the Mississippi launched a fifteen-day Simultaneous Evangelistic Crusade at the beginning of April. During the first ten days of the crusade an estimated 165,000 persons were added to the congregations.

The National Association of Evangelicals adopted a resolution protesting against "frivolous or carnal" television programs and commercials which "promote the use of alcoholic beverages and encourage other habits injurious to the youth." The resolution demanded laws "requiring television to present programs of education, artistic culture, and constructive entertainment and that the apparent monopoly of liquor, beer, and tobacco interests over this form of domestic entertainment be broken up."

A bill to require daily Bible reading in the California public schools was referred by the Assembly Education Committee to the State Board of Education for a two-year study. The study was proposed by the Assembly Education Committee after it had deadlocked 11-11 on the measure.

Convinced that the average clergyman has little idea of what his church members really believe, the Rev. W. Leigh Ribble sent questionnaires to the 550 communicants of Grace and Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Richmond, Va. Following each question were multiple answers from which the communicant was asked to choose the one which best expressed his own view. The answers on the 150 questionnaires which have come back ranged all the way from strict orthodoxy to atheism. The rector does not think this is a condition peculiar to his church, but that it is "fairly typical of Protestantism." He feels that the Church has been neglecting doctrine while putting great emphasis on "teaching people how to be good church members."

The Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has raised more than \$6,000,000 during 1950. Dr. M. Theron Rankin, Executive Secretary, said that \$275,000 has been earmarked for the purpose of sending out 100 new missionary appointees this year. The greatest single area of advance has been in Japan, where there are now 74 Southern Baptist missionaries. Plans are to bring this total to 100 before the end of the year.

The University of Delaware has imposed a ban on campus sectarian religious services. The ruling of the university bars sectarian, though it places no restrictions on interdenominational, services.

Dr. Calvin Schnucker, professor of Rural Church Work at the University of Dubuque, Iowa, told a group of pastors of the Wisconsin Council of Churches who met at Madison that the rural church has an "important mission" in strengthening the family and centering its program in the family. Dr. Schnucker charged that for the past twenty-five years the rural church "has sought to destroy the family either by ignoring it or by advocating the things that destroy it." Mechanization, rapid transportation, emphasis on money and on college degrees, have all been factors in the family disintegration program, he contended.

Mr. Hughes, an atheist and an alumnus of the University of Minnesota, contends that it is illegal for the institution to permit religious organizations to use university property for their meetings. The complaint which he filed for criminal action against the university on the grounds that it is violating the separation of Church and State has been rejected by the United States Government. C. U. Landrum, United States District Attorney in St. Paul, said it is "the view of the Department of Justice that action in the matter would not be desirable and none is contemplated."

The Slovak Evangelical Lutheran Church opened a general office at Modra Slovakia in the presence of Zdenek Fierlinger, Minister of Church Affairs in the Czechoslovak Communist government. Mr. Fierlinger called upon Protestant churches and clergymen to keep abreast of what is going on in the world and take their stand on the side of the "forces of progress and peace." It was announced that the Church would shortly adopt a new constitution expressing loyalty to the Prague regime.

At a conference attended by representatives of the Anglican Church and the Lutheran churches of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden, a special committee was formed to promote closer relations between the Church of England and the Scandinavian Lutheran churches. Five of the twelve delegates belonged to the Anglican Church, three each to the Norwegian and Danish churches, and one to the Finnish Church. For the past ten or twelve years the Anglican Church has maintained connections with the Lutheran churches of Sweden and Finland. Among the members of the committee are Dr. Eivind Berggrav, former Primate of the Norwegian Lutheran Church; Prof. Regin Prenter of Denmark, chairman of the Commission on Theology of the Lutheran World Federation; and Prof. S. L. Greenslade of Durham, England.

The Home Mission Committee of the Methodist Church in England is alarmed at the increasing number of villages without a Methodist church. During the past five years 488 chapels were sold and a still larger number closed for services.

King George VI of England will present a silver cross and a pair of candlesticks to the Washington Cathedral as a token of gratitude on behalf of British service men and women who worshiped there during World War II. The altar plate will be dedicated at a service in St. Paul's Cathedral in London on July 4, at which time General Dwight D. Eisenhower will present a scroll to St. Paul's in memory of American servicemen buried in England. Subsequently, the altar plate will be installed at Washington Cathedral in colorful ceremonies, to which President Truman, the British Ambassador, church leaders, and other dignitaries will be invited.

Tours of Europe, Latin America, Alaska, and the southern United States for church members have been announced by several leading Protestant denominations. The tours are aimed at providing firsthand contact with missionary work, places of historic Christian interest, and

current religious, social, political, and economic conditions. The largest number of tours is the series planned in connection with the Eighth Ecumenical Methodist Conference to be held in Oxford, England, August 28 to September 7. Itineraries will include Methodist historical shrines in Great Britain and visits to various European countries. Centers of Protestant work in the southern United States, Mexico, and Caribbean countries will be visited by touring groups sponsored by agencies of the Disciples of Christ and the Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A. Other Presbyterian tours will cover South America and Alaska.

The German Evangelical Tent Mission, which was barred by the Nazi regime, will resume its activities this summer. Three big tents—one of them a gift from American Protestants—will tour such west German centers as Wiesbaden, Mannheim, Heidelberg, Stuttgart, Wuerzburg, Osnabrueck, as well as parts of the Soviet Zone.

Celebrations to commemorate the 1900th anniversary of the introduction of Christianity in Greece by St. Paul are being observed this summer. The celebrations were originally scheduled for last year but were postponed to coincide with the Homecoming Year of the Greeks proclaimed by King Paul. This year Greeks living in all parts of the world have been invited to return for a visit to their homeland.

The Lower House and the House of Counselors in Japan has embodied legal guarantees of freedom for Christian churches in the new Religious Corporation Law. One of the most important clauses in the law deals with freedom of religious belief, worship, and propaganda. It says: "Freedom of faith guaranteed in the constitution must be respected in all phases of government. Therefore no provision in this law shall be construed as restricting any individual, group, or organization from disseminating teachings, observing ceremonies or functions, or conducting other religious acts on the basis of said guaranteed freedom."

In an address to two hundred members and guests attending the twentieth anniversary of the Catholic Poetry Society of America, the Most Rev. James H. Griffiths, auxiliary bishop of New York, urged poets and other writers to strive for intelligibility, reality, and the positive in their work. Pointing to a "descending spiral" toward godlessness in the modern world, Bishop Griffiths said he believed contemporary atheism was built upon an escape from reality.

The French Roman Catholic hierarchy has issued an urgent appeal to the French government for "immediate" State aid to church schools. The bishops maintained their appeal was especially necessary now because the rising birth rate had caused a large increase in the number of school-age children.

Dutch and Belgium Roman Catholics have donated ten motor chapels for service to displaced German Catholics. Each chapel is equipped with an altar and loud-speaker and has storage space for relief supplies to be distributed after the holding of services. The motor chapels and their missionary personnel have been sent into the dioceses of Bamberg, Fulda, Hildesheim, Mainz, Muenster, Osnabrueck, Paderborn, and Rothenburg. One of the chapels will serve displaced Catholics in the Soviet Zone.

Osservatore Romano, Vatican newspaper, endorsed President Truman's dismissal of General Douglas MacArthur as a decision motivated by "a desire for peace," even though it "might even be against his own popularity."

BOOK REVIEW

All books reviewed in this periodical may be procured from or through Concordia Publishing House, 3558 South Jefferson Avenue, St. Louis 18, Missouri.

THE INTERPRETER'S BIBLE. The Holy Scriptures in the King James and Revised Versions with General Remarks and Introduction, Exegesis, Exposition for Each Book of the Bible. In Twelve Volumes, Volume VII. Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, New York and Nashville. 917 pages, 7×10½. \$8.50.

A new major work here makes its initial bow, number seven of a commentary on the whole Bible which is to consist of twelve volumes. It will be a highly composite work; the number of contributors is 125. Among these men one finds those who today are best known in the English-speaking world as Biblical scholars, e. g., E. J. Goodspeed, E. F. Scott, John Knox, F. C. Grant, H. J. Cadbury. The undertaking when finished will undoubtedly be impressive in size. We have an indication in the present volume whose number of pages has been mentioned above. The total number of words which it will contain has been estimated at about eight million. The theology which one finds here is of many kinds, ranging from the ultra-modernistic position of Dr. Robert H. Pfeiffer of Harvard and Boston Universities to the conservative one of Floyd V. Filson of McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago. I find the following Lutherans among the contributors: Oscar F. Blackwelder, pastor in Washington, D. C.; Jacob M. Meyers of Gettysburg Seminary (OT); Paul Scherer, Union Seminary, New York; Raymond T. Stamm, Gettysburg Seminary (NT). The Editorial Board consists of George A. Buttrick, pastor of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church, who is called the Commentary Editor, Walter Russell Bowie of the Protestant Episcopal Theological Seminary in Virginia, who is Associate Editor of Exposition; Paul Scherer, Associate Editor of Exposition; John Knox of Union Seminary, New York, Associate Editor of New Testament Introduction and Exegesis; Samuel Terrien of Union Theological Seminary, New York, Associate Editor of Old Testament Introduction and Exegesis; and Nolan B. Harmon of the Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, who is called the Editor.

As one opens the volume, one comes first upon general articles and then introduction, exegesis, and exposition of the separate Biblical books. There is a differentiation made between exegesis and exposition, the former referring to the meaning of the text, the second pertaining more to practical discussion and application.

In the commentary section we find at the top of the page, in parallel columns, the King James Version and the Revised Standard Version of

the respective passage, below these the exegetical remarks "printed across the page, with the key-phrase struck off in bolder type. Below these is the exposition, printed in two columns." The first volume contains three excellent maps. Undoubtedly this feature will be found in succeeding volumes too. Since we are here dealing with a very ambitious venture with which every theologian would like to become acquainted, I shall list the table of contents of Volume VII, which will well illustrate the plan of the work. "General Articles on the New Testament: The Gospel in the New Testament, by R. H. Strachan; The New Testament and Early Christian Literature, by Henry J. Cadbury; The Language of the New Testament, by Bruce M. Metzger; The Growth of the Gospels, by Alfred M. Perry; New Testament Times: I. The Greco-Roman World, by S. Vernon McCasland; II. Palestine, by Morton S. Enslin; The Life and Ministry of Jesus, by Vincent Taylor; The Teaching of Jesus: I. The Proclamation of the Kingdom, by Clarence Tucker Craig; II. The Sermon on the Mount, by Amos N. Wilder; III. The Parables, by Walter Russell Bowie; The History of the Early Church: I. The Beginnings, by Ernest F. Scott; II. The Life of Paul, by William H. P. Hatch; III. Paul the Apostle, by Paul S. Minear, IV. The Post-Apostolic Age, by Massey H. Shepherd, Jr. — The Gospel According to St. Matthew: Introduction, by Sherman E. Johnson; Exegesis, by Sherman E. Johnson; Exposition, by George A. Buttrick; Text. — The Gospel According to St. Mark: Introduction, by Frederick C. Grant; Text; Exegesis, by Frederick C. Grant; Exposition, by Halford E. Luccock. — Maps: Jerusalem in New Testament Times; Palestine: The Synoptic Gospels; Galilee and Samaria in New Testament Times.

The amount of information gathered and the erudition displayed are simply enormous. The articles are quite exhaustive; the one treating of the Life and Ministry of Jesus, e. g., consists of 30 pages. Bibliographies are appended to make it possible for students to cultivate a certain subject more in detail. The approach of at least many of the writers, as one of my above remarks implies, is not that of the Bible Christian who sees in the Scriptures the infallible Guide graciously granted us by God; quite often Modernism speaks. The external appearance of the volume is most pleasing. One glance suffices to tell a person that here he is dealing with a superb product of the printer's art. How soon the other volumes will be on the market is not disclosed.

WILLIAM F. ARNDT

EXPLORING THE BIBLE. A Study of Background and Principles. By Frank E. Gaebelein, Litt. D., Headmaster of the Stony Brook School. Third revised edition. *An Our Hope Press Book.* Published by Van Kampen Press, Wheaton, Ill. 150 pages, 5×8. \$2.25.

This book, published first in 1929 and now coming before us in its third edition, is written by an educator who has had a good deal of experience in teaching boys the sacred Scriptures. He says in the preface (p. XII): "The Stony Brook School has courageously given to the study

of the English Bible an honored place as a subject required for three recitations a week throughout the entire secondary course. Academic standards have not suffered. The School has met the tests of regional accrediting agencies. Graduates have entered college and have proved, by the quality of their work, the caliber of their preparation. So much for the fear, often expressed by cautious schoolmasters, that college requirements will not permit the expenditure of time for Bible study. . . . An institution such as this constitutes a working laboratory for the development of methods of Bible study. The classes of boys which I have taught in this subject have given me invaluable lessons. The present volume is an attempt to put in permanent form some of these lessons. Much of the material embodied in the following pages has either met the test of classroom use or is the outgrowth of classroom experience."

That the book treats subjects which every Bible teacher would like to discuss with his class is evident from the table of contents; the various chapters have these headings: I. Knowing the Bible; II. How We Got Our Bible; III. The Meaning of Inspiration; IV. The Structure of the Bible; V. The Bible a Spiritual Organism; VI. Seven Guiding Principles for Bible Study; VII. God's Plan for the Ages; VIII. God's Immutable Promises; IX. The Testimony of Jesus; X. Some Laws of Scripture Interpretation.

The author is an evangelical Christian, who loves the Lord and His holy Word. The chapter on inspiration is very much worth while. The charge that the plenary inspiration theory is the same as the dictation theory is examined and combated. At the same time the author unequivocally stands for the inerrancy of the Scriptures.

What a Lutheran reviewer regrets deeply as he peruses this volume (which, as he will gladly admit, contains much precious gold) is its evident "dispensationalism." After the battle of Armageddon will come the Millennium, "the time of blessing of which the prophets sang" (p.85). What a grand period it will be! "Sickness and physical death will be the exception, not the rule" (*ibid.*). But evil will not yet be uprooted; hence, after the end of the thousand years, there will be another period of heartache and conflict, terminating in the ultimate overthrow of Satan and his cohorts.

In addition there are some things which strike this reviewer as ill-advised speculation. The chapter on "the structure of the Bible" represents a "playing" (*sit venia verbo!*) with numbers which I fear will do more harm than good. Thus (p. 48) the remarks on the number 4. "A number of further divisibility, 4 stands for the weakness found in the world and man. In common parlance we speak of 'the four corners of the earth' and 'the four points of the compass.' Important is the indirect meaning of trial, testing, and experience, derived from the fact that the earth is the scene of man's testing." How easy it would be to demolish this argumentation if one should start from the fact that 4 is the first square in

the series of numbers and travel through the Bible from the majestic fourth day of Creation to the four disciples called at the Sea of Galilee! But what would be the use of such a *jeu d'esprit*? In summary, we rejoice that the author exalts our blessed Savior and His complete redemption and that he defends the authority and inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures, but we deplore his departure from sound doctrine in the eschatological questions and his addiction to bizarre exegetical procedures.

W. ARNDT

LIFE MATURES. By Roy L. Laurin. Van Kampen Press, Wheaton, Ill. 332 pages, 8×6. \$3.00.

Dr. Laurin is pastor of a large church in Pasadena, Calif., widely known as a lecturer and radio speaker, and author of various expository works on the Bible. In *Life Matures* he represents the contents of St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians from the viewpoint of Christian holiness, around which he builds his whole exposition. His exegesis is simple and direct; his language clear and dignified; his application practical and as a rule appealing and convincing. He furnishes much illustrative material that is new and striking. The Lutheran reader must differ with him, however, on his interpretation of those passages which treat of Baptism and the Lord's Supper as also of the means of grace in general. On these points the author's Reformed Fundamentalism does not permit him to do justice to what the Apostle teaches (cf. pp. 193—215). The writer goes beyond St. Paul also in stating that it would have been a sin for a woman to be married at the time of the great persecution of the Church when marriage meant so much more suffering for mothers. St. Paul does not say that in 1 Cor. 7:25 ff. In 1 Cor. 13:13 his explanation of why love abides is hardly adequate (cf. p. 247). Much greater is the exegetical failure of the author when he forces upon 1 Cor. 15:52 the millennialistic error which the Apostle teaches neither there nor in Second Thessalonians (cf. p. 305 f.). In explaining 1 Cor. 14:34 ff. neither Dr. Laurin nor Dr. Scofield, whom he quotes on the passage, interprets St. Paul correctly. Both permit women to do what the Apostle expressly forbids. While therefore this practical exposition of First Corinthians contains much that is good and useful, it must be studied with considerable care, since it is not always a reliable guide.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

THE APOSTLE PAUL. HIS LIFE AND WORK. Written by Olaf Moe. Translated by A. L. Vigness. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis, Minn. 577 pages 6×9. \$4.75.

Though the books on Paul are legion, there are two reasons why I am happy that I can announce the appearance of this work: it is doctrinally conservative, and it is marked by magnificent scholarship. The author, Dr. Olaf Edvard Moe, is professor of the Independent Theological Seminary in Oslo, Norway. The book, it is true, appeared in Norwegian as

long ago as 1923 and hence cannot be said to be up to date in its bibliographical references and discussion of recent theories, but except for a technical scholar this fact will not constitute a serious drawback.

In a thorough way, using all sources available, Biblical as well as profane, the author describes the world of Paul and his life and work. Facts are marshaled and given their evaluation; there is no wasting of words, but neither is there disappointing brevity. Here one receives information on the synagog services in the diaspora, the education of the Jewish children in these areas, the theological schools of Jerusalem, the Pharisees, the different forms of heathen worship in the Roman Empire—all this as the background for the narrative of Paul's life and a sketch of the contents of his Epistles. That the work is conservative we see in the full acceptance of the Book of Acts as a reliable account and the acknowledgment of the genuineness of all thirteen Epistles bearing the name of Paul in our New Testament. The negative higher critical theories are not passed over in silence; as a rule, they are presented and then shown to be untenable. The Bible Christian in reading this book has the happy feeling that the sacred garden in which he loves to walk is not desecrated by inimical forces, but that, on the contrary, the flowers and shrubs are shown him in their divine splendor.

This judgment I am glad to express in spite of the difference existing between the author and myself on views pertaining to some historical details. He holds the Apostolic Council to have occurred before the Epistle to the Galatians was written; according to his opinion this Epistle was addressed to the Celts living in Northern Galatia and not to the congregations founded by Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey of these men; he believes the captivity letters were not written in Ephesus, but in Rome. On these matters my opinion differs, but what of it, the points enumerated do not belong to the field of doctrine, but historical criticism, and, besides, there do not seem to be enough data on which to base a compelling decision. There are a few real weaknesses in the book. The discussion of Antichrist and of the meaning of Rom. 11:26 ("all Israel") is not satisfactory (p. 311), nor do I think that the author is right in saying (p. 83 f.) that when Jesus "extended grace" to publicans and sinners, "He broke the bonds of the old covenant." But generally speaking, we have in this work a gift to the Church for which we should be profoundly grateful.

W. ARNDT

NON-CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS. A COMPARATIVE STUDY. By Ione Lowman. Van Kampen Press, Wheaton, Ill. 123 pages, 8×6. \$1.75.

Dr. Ione Lowman is librarian of the Bible Institute of Los Angeles and has for the last twenty years taught a course in comparative religions. Out of her classroom work has grown her book on comparative religions, which, while not always profound and exhaustive, gives the reader a good overview of the leading non-Christian religions: Animism, Hinduism, Bud-

dhism, Confucianism, Shintoism, Mohammedanism, Judaism, Zoroastrianism. All these pagan religions she compares with Christianity as the "religion of faith," showing how little man-made religion can teach about God, Creation, sin, salvation, resurrection, and immortality. This is a good book to put into the hands of laymen. It may also be used by pastors who wish to present to their confirmation classes the difference between Christianity and the most popular ethnic religions, which still hold millions in the bondage of spiritual ignorance and death. For her chief sources Dr. Lowman has used the works of Dr. S. Zwemer, Dr. A. Pieters, and Dr. D. L. Jamison, though in her appended bibliography she mentions more than fifty of the best modern books on the subject.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

HOMILETIC THESAURUS ON THE GOSPELS. By Harold F. J. Ellingsen. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids 6, Mich. 351 pages, 9½×6½. \$4.50.

This is the third of a three-volume set bearing this title. It contains a wealth of homiletical material on more than two hundred texts from the Fourth Gospel from the pens of more than two hundred and fifty prominent preachers and scholars of past centuries. As is usually the case, one finds material which at once appeals and some which does not; but there is no doubt that a careful perusal of this book will prove profitable and will aid the student in acquiring a freshness of thought and presentation.

O. E. SOHN

SPURGEON'S EXPOSITORY ENCYCLOPAEDIA. SERMONS BY CHARLES H. SPURGEON. Classified and Arranged for Ready Reference. Vol. I. Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich. 510 pages, 9×6. \$3.75.

While there are many editions of Spurgeon's sermons on the religious book market, this new edition of the discourses of the famous English Baptist preacher offers a new arrangement and classification. The fifty-two sermons in this volume are classified thus: Abraham 5 sermons; Adoption 5; Affliction 11; Aged 2; Angels 3; Assurance 5; Atonement 5; Backsliding 8; Beatitudes 8. This arrangement suggests the headings under which Spurgeon's sermons will appear in subsequent volumes. Spurgeon's sermons are so well known that they require no special introduction or commentary. But while they deserve diligent study, they require also critical examination by Lutheran pastors. The very first sermon in this volume "Justification by Faith—Illustrated by Abram's Righteousness," while rich in solid theological material and absorbingly interesting, rejects Baptism and the Lord's Supper as means of grace. Then also the secret of Spurgeon's success lay not merely in the message which he delivered, but largely also in his almost hypnotizing approach as preacher. We congratulate the Baker Book House on this handy edition, for Spurgeon belongs to the great pulpit orators whose fame never fades and whose Gospel message is always timely.

JOHN THEODORE MUELLER

FOR YOUR FELLOWSHIP IN THE GOSPEL. By Frank Clutz. Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, Pa., 14 pages, 8×5. \$2.40 per dozen.

This little pamphlet is intended as a gift booklet to the newly confirmed and brings ten brief meditations on various Christian blessings, privileges, and obligations as well as a certificate of membership. This certificate is flexible enough to permit its use also for such as enter by profession or transfer. There are a few statements to which we would not subscribe, but that need not detract from the value of the book. O. E. SOHN

THE LUTHERAN CHURCH AND THE NEGRO IN AMERICA. By Ervin E. Krebs. Board of American Missions, American Lutheran Church, Columbus, Ohio. 104 pages, 6×9. 75cents.

The chief purpose of this little volume is to depict the work which the Lutheran Church has done for the American Negro in the last fifty years. Quite naturally it concerns itself primarily with the record of the American Lutheran Church, though it also brings a detailed account of the work done by the Synodical Conference, including a complete roster of its personnel and stations as of 1948. Then there is a special chapter on "Rethinking Missions Co-operatively" which presents in amended form a statement of policies on the work of colored missions to be done jointly by the American Lutheran Church and the United Lutheran Church, as well as other Lutheran bodies willing to co-operate. Finally, there is the American Lutheran Conference statement on race relations and a survey of missionary possibilities. A useful addition to our mission reference literature. O. E. SOHN

PEACE CAN BE WON. By Paul G. Hoffmann. Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, N.Y., 1951. 188 pages, 5½×8. \$2.50.

Paul G. Hoffman, one-time president of the Studebaker Corporation, was administrator of the Economic Co-operation Administration, the agency in Europe which administered the Marshall Plan. He now directs the Ford Foundation in its endeavors to restore peace. This book does not speak directly to churches. It is, however, a remarkably straightforward, comprehensible, and detailed description of Mr. Hoffman's plan for winning and "waging" the peace. He discusses the problems and essentials of peace throughout the world and describes the four fronts of the process: military, economic, political, and information. In the welter of literature besieging the churches — isolationist, interventionist, pacifist, war-mongering, welfare state, *laissez faire* — Mr. Hoffman's remarks are sober, factual, and concerned with government as it must really be conducted. Interesting is his hope that the Communist regime may break up from within and his assertion that, much as it will cost, his plan for peace must be paid for by taxation promptly. "Despite all current strains and anxieties, we are living in one of history's most privileged periods" (p.178) concludes Mr. Hoffman. RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

DEMOCRACY AND THE CHURCHES. By James Hastings Nichols. The Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1951. 298 pages, 6×9. \$4.50.

The impulse for this volume was given by the Committee on Religious Tolerance, but the position of the book is uniquely the author's. He is Associate Professor of the History of Christianity in the Federated Theological Faculty of the University of Chicago. Professor Nichols asserts his commitment both to the Christian Gospel and to "liberal democracy." By liberal democracy the author implies: free men living under guarantees of law by consent and with representative government, participating in discussion for mutual criticism. He finds the religious origins to be not from Roman Catholic, Lutheran, or Anglican societies, but from Puritan Protestantism, in which he includes "Congregationalists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Unitarians, Quakers, Disciples, Salvation Army, and the evangelical party within the Anglican communion" (p. 10). He points to agents of liberal Roman Catholicism in his discussion, but shows that the Church has disavowed them. The discussion takes us through origins from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries, but spends most of its bulk on processes in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The author concerns himself not so much with doctrinal theories of the churches as he does with their practical approach to the problems of democracy, such as the origins of constitutional government, the repudiation of absolutism, the doctrine and practice of natural rights, the relation of the churches to the governments of their lands. The compactly written book is unsparing in its criticism of the liaison between Roman Catholicism and Fascism and views apparently more liberal American tendencies as "protective coloring." By and large, Lutheranism does not fare too well in the author's estimate of contributions to democracy and comes under his chief criticism of American Protestantism that it compartmentalizes the Christian community (p. 241). Professor Nichols points out that the denominational barriers among Protestants have postponed their more genuine contributions to society. Here is a piece of history written with a sure grasp of sources and a tough adherence to fact. Suggested readings, notes, and an index enhance its value. RICHARD R. CAEMMERER

SNAPSHOTS, by B. H. J. Habel. Augsburg Publishing House, Minneapolis 15, Minn. 167 pages, 8×5. \$1.25.

A collection of fifty-two informal sketches, reminiscences, and anecdotes of missionary life. We have found some very interesting, some not, and we are at a loss for a good reason to recommend its purchase to our clergy.

O. E. SOHN

BOOKS RECEIVED

From Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, Mo.:

PORTALS OF PRAYER NO. 105. "THE ENDURING WORD." By Martin Walker. Daily Devotions from June 6 to July 28. 10 cents each.

ANDACHTSBUECHLEIN No. 105. QUELLE DES LEBENDIGEN WASSERS. By Theo. Laetsch. 6. Juni bis zum 28. Juli 1951. 10 cents each.

BUT HOW CAN I KNOW? By H. W. Gockel. $5 \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. 39 pages. 25 cents net.

"YOUNG PEOPLE NEED THE BIBLE CLASS." By J. M. Weidenschilling. Board for Parish Education. $5\frac{1}{4} \times 8\frac{1}{4}$. 5 pages. 5 cents.

"A CONFIDENTIAL CHAT WITH BEGINNING SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS." By Lois Schoenfeld. $3\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$. 11 pages. 10 cents.

BUILDING THE CHRISTIAN HOME. Tract No. 12. By Oscar E. Feucht. $3\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$. 32 pages. 10 cents.

CHRISTIAN COURTSHIP. Tract No. 179. By E. W. Frenk. $3\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{3}{4}$. 25 pages. 10 cents.

CONCORDIA BIBLE TEACHER. "Life Lessons from the Book of Proverbs." Vol. XII, No. 4. \$1.00 per annum.

CONCORDIA BIBLE STUDENT. "Life Lessons from the Book of Proverbs." Vol. XI, No. 4. 65 cents per annum. July to September, 1951. Edited by Rev. John M. Weidenschilling, S. T. D., under auspices of the Board for Parish Education, The Lutheran Church — Missouri Synod.

From Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

OUR HOPE OF SURVIVAL. By George L. Murray. $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$. 133 pages. \$1.50.

From Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich.:

FAITH IS THE VICTORY. By Buell H. Kazee. $5\frac{1}{2} \times 8$. 181 pages. \$2.50.

From Moody Press, Chicago, Ill.:

A PRACTICAL PRIMER ON PRAYER. By Dorothy C. Haskin. $4\frac{3}{4} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$. 127 pages. Paper, \$.35.

From Van Kampen Press, Wheaton, Ill.:

FIRST THE RAPTURE. By J. F. Strombeck. Published by Strombeck Agency, Inc., Moline, Ill. $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. 197 pages. \$1.00.

From The Warner Press, Anderson, Ind.:

CLOUDS AND RAINBOWS AND OTHER RADIO SERMONS. By Russell V. DeLong. $5\frac{1}{2} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$. 112 pages. \$1.25.

DEEPER EXPERIENCES OF FAMOUS CHRISTIANS. By J. Gilchrist Lawson. $5\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{1}{2}$. 382 pages. \$2.50.

MESSAGES OF CHRISTIAN BROTHERHOOD. By W. Dale Oldham.
5¼ × 7½. 128 pages. \$1.75.

From Wilcox & Follett, Chicago, Ill.:

RELIGION MAKES SENSE. By Randolph Crump Miller. 5¾ × 8. iii.
308 pages. \$3.00.

From Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, Mich.:

DOES SCIENCE SUPPORT THE SCRIPTURES? By O. E. Sanden. 5½ ×
7¾. \$2.00.

